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TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH PART-TIME FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT FOSTERS FLOURISHING

A DISSERTATION

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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This work is dedicated to the participants

who shared their stories, and to all part-time faculty

who are so committed to teaching and sharing the gifts of their knowledge.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigates the professional development experiences part-time faculty identify as positive. The purpose is to examine how positive professional development experiences inform part-time faculty's subsequent teaching, and what relational qualities if any are present in those positive experiences. Nine part-time faculty - five women and four men - ages 27 to 64, with teaching experience ranging from 3 to 20 years, responded to questions designed from Cooperrider's Appreciative Inquiry model. Conceptual frameworks include the adult development/adult learning interface and relational theory and its application in psychological and educational settings. Participants' positive experiences and how these experienees inform their subsequent teaching are analyzed using a grounded theory approach. The presence of relational qualities in participants' experiences is explored using narrative analysis. A general professional development model that acknowledges, supports, and takes into account this population's wide-ranging needs is presented.

This study suggests two findings. First, participants identified experiences that took place over one week to a number of years, and were characterized by one or more sustained relationships, either with one other person or a small group of people. Further, these relationships were characterized by one or more relational qualities. The recognition/acknowledgement faculty experienced led to a sense of freedom. The sustained aspect of the experience encouraged more recognition/acknowledgement reinforced bringing deeper levels of freedom.

As economic constraints continue to force administrators to tighten their budgets, and administrators respond by temporarily freezing and/or dissolving vacated tenure-track positions, the part-time populations grows larger. This study contributes to a growing advocacy for the part-time faculty population as it illuminates the undeniable need for the higher education community to consider, strategize, and initiate models that provide appropriate compensation and professional development to the part-time faculty population. This population's diversity further demands that professional development models recognize part-time faculty's individual needs. The study explores elements in professional development experiences that nine part-time faculty identify as positive. Participants' narratives are examined for examples of relationships between part-time faculty and their employers, using the lens of relational qualities. A review of recent research on relational theory in a number of fields indicates that qualities including relational awareness, mutuality and a willingness to not know potentially engender people's flourishing. The goal of this study is to propose a general model of professional development for this population, professional development which acknowledges, supports part time faculty, and takes into account their wide-ranging needs.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study is to contribute to a growing advocacy for the situation of part-time higher education faculty. What drives this advocacy is a long-awaited recognition within the academic community of the marginalization and second-class citizenship of this population, as evidenced by inadequate pay and lack of access to professional development resources. As economic constraints continue to force administrators to tighten their budgets, administrators continue to temporarily freeze and/or dissolve vacated tenure-track positions, actions which have transformed the academic workforce in such a way that higher education part-time faculty teaching in U.S. institutions has reached 59%, up 11% since 1989 (Curtis, 2005). Those tracking this trend agree it will only continue for the foreseeable future (Jacobe, 2006; Lyons, 2007; Townsend, 2003). Given that more and more part-time faculty are teaching both graduate and undergraduate courses, higher education must begin to consider, strategize, and initiate models that provide appropriate compensation and professional development to the part-time faculty population. This population's diversity further demands that professional development models recognize part-time faculty's individual needs.

This study assumes that part-time faculty narratives have something to tell higher education administrators, deans, and department chairs about what these educators need in order to flourish professionally. The study explores elements in professional development experiences that nine part-time faculty identify as positive. Participants' narratives are examined for examples of relationships between part-time faculty and their

employers, using the lens of relational qualities. A review of recent research on relational theory in a number of fields indicates that qualities including relational awareness, mutuality and a willingness to not know potentially engender people's flourishing. The goal of this study is to propose a general model of professional development for this population, professional development which acknowledges, supports part time faculty, and takes into account their wide-ranging needs.

I am one of these part-time educators. After years providing direct service in women's health, mental health, and human development positions, I found a passion for teaching the content and process inherent in these fields. For over seventeen years the majority of teaching experience I had was at a state academic institution that employs teachers exclusively on an individual course-contract basis. It is known for its incorporation of policies and schedules that support adult learners' typical needs. For a number of years I taught, while still working full-time in the Assessment and Referral Department of a behavioral health service in a hospital setting. Through this concurrent work experience I grew very excited to discover similarities between counseling and teaching.

This early stage in my gradual transition from counselor to teacher felt easy and natural. But soon I began noticing that I felt unprepared or ineffective in conceptualizing or responding to students' reactions in certain situations, and classroom dynamics. Reflecting alone and with colleagues helped me ascertain two important factors. First, I was making assumptions about students' motivations and behavior through a therapeutic lens. Although understandable in light of my prior professional work, making assumptions based on this lens meant I was operating with only partial information.

Equally important, I was assuming that what I needed to know about the differences between a counseling lens and a teaching lens would come naturally as well. I wanted to teach, and teach well. So I sought out professional development opportunities that I could afford and that I could participate in based on my work commitments.

My part-time colleagues and I were invited to quarterly *faculty forums* at our teaching site, typically presented by a colleague. We were invited to attend state-wide day-long conferences twice a year as well. I chose to attend as many of these forums and conferences over the years as I was able, given my schedule constraints.

In 1999 I participated in a five-meeting seminar series at our college, funded by the Funds for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education [FIPSE]. Presentations focused on adult development and adult learning theory, and their applications to the adult learner. We reviewed effective instructional practices such as creating congruent course goals and objectives, user-friendly outlines and syllabi, and best practices in assignment strategies. Those participating from our region met at our school. During each meeting we 'met' via internet technology with participant groups who gathered at *their* region's site. The presenters rotated between sites for each meeting. This seminar series stands as the foundational learning experience in my professional development. It also provided a much needed balance to my primarily self-directed learning efforts. Equally important, all program costs were paid for by a grant. We participated at no charge.

After my initial years at this college, I developed a consistent course load of two courses per quarter. At one point my employer created the title of *core faculty* as a means to recognize those of us who taught required (core) courses on a regular basis. As a

result, I was assured two course contracts per quarter. Although any course was cancelled when enrollment fell below a minimum, this seldom happened. Core faculty status gave me significantly greater assurance of an income I could count on.

The FIPSE seminar, combined with my opportunity to teach this number of courses on a regular basis, cemented my decision to apply for doctoral study. I knew taking this step in my professional development was one that countless other part-time instructors were considering as well. I understood that pursuing further formal study no longer led to ready attainment of a tenure-track faculty position; these positions were beginning to decline. On the other hand, I was hungry for a learning community, and wanted to learn more about adult learning and adult development as they applied to the adult learner. I saw graduate school as the best way to build my developing skill base.

Early on in doctoral study I realized I was actually most interested in the *educator* as adult learner. Through initial literature reviews I learned how fortunate I'd been to have had the professional development opportunities described above. Further, I assumed part-time faculty at other institutions shared a relationship with their employers similar to the one I had with mine. I had been encouraged to seek out the school's regional director or one of the site directors with any questions, problems or concerns. Both provided consistent support, were genuinely interested in my professional development, and took time to reflect with me on what might have caused a class to go awry. They were my advisors, consultants and colleagues. Truly, they were my mentors.

Having learned of this stark difference between my and others' experience, I designed several studies to learn more. I interviewed both part-time faculty about their experiences and administrators who directed programs created to address part-time

faculty needs. Part-time faculty identified a number of factors also reflected in the literature. A common experience they described was either the complete or near-absence of any person-to-person communication with their employer. They typically received all communication - including their contract, paychecks, and instructions for grade submissions – by mail. I was shocked to hear one participant report that she arrived to teach her first class of a semester-long course, only to find out that it had been cancelled earlier in the week. No one had notified her. Some part-timers said they had no one person specified by their employer to seek out with questions. Based on these kinds of experiences, part-time faculty interviewed had the general impression that their employers had no interest in establishing relationship beyond seeking and obtaining a body to teach a course.

Essentially, the majority of these educators had no meaningful, bi-directional professional relationships with their employers. What I found equally alarming was part-timers' acceptance of these circumstances. But I was humbled by their reasons for why they did. They stated they had no choice because they needed the work. Most said they aspired to a full-time faculty position and hoped that by 'putting in their time' (paying their dues by teaching under such conditions), they would be rewarded. Some said they did not want to appear 'needy' or unable to successfully adapt to these employment conditions, for fear it would hurt their chances for obtaining future teaching contracts with their current employer. Part-time faculty experiences, coupled with further literature review, became the foundation for my understanding of what is commonly called the "plight" of the part-time faculty (Burk, 2000) in higher education.

It is no surprise that faculty development models for part-time faculty are limited.

Sources including Lyons, Kysilka & Pawlas' (1999) *The adjunct professor's guide to success: Surviving and thriving in the college classroom* and websites supporting this population's professional development are a stark reminder that higher education continues to marginalize this faculty group[1]. Dedicated solely to part-timers' perspectives, issues and needs, AdjunctNation.com provides part-time faculty with information and sources on a number of topics including health insurance, instructional practices, unionizing, job opportunities nation-wide, and generally 'supporting our own'. This information is valuable and informative. Further, providing resources via a website transcends those obstacles inherent in many part-time faculty schedules, including one's inability to attend professional development meetings due to schedule conflicts. This website is undoubtedly a lifeline for many adjuncts. However, sources similar to AdjunctNation.com remind part-time faculty that they must fend for themselves when seeking professional development.

Having received meaningful interest, guidance, and mentoring as an integrated and ongoing part of my own professional development, I felt driven to understand how other part-time faculty sustain themselves in their work in the context of little or no relationship with their employers. I began formulating general questions. How do part-time faculty grow professionally? What factors influence the kinds of needs faculty have? How do they sustain, let alone nourish, their teaching in the face of such limited support? Although I started out with the goal to design a model applicable across settings, my review of recent initiatives addressing part-timers' professional development needs left me believing this would be a futile enterprise. Any initiative addressing part-

[1] This point is evidenced by the near-absence of research and references made to them in mainstream higher education academic research journals.

time faculty professional development would have to take into account the wide spectrum of needs characterizing this population, in addition to the individual characteristics of each institution. Finally, I understood that institutions would likely consider only those applications that recognize and appreciate budgetary constraints.

For my final study prior to dissertation research, I identified the role that relationship plays in learning as an area I needed to learn more about. Having grown professionally and personally through self-study and teaching feminist theory premises and practices, I recalled critical research including that by Gilligan (1982), Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986), and Jordan (1991). These studies highlighted how relationships characterized by certain qualities can become a central vehicle through which people grow, develop, or flourish.

I discovered the ever-expanding research on relationship in a number of disciplines. I reviewed relational theory as conceptualized in a number of fields and then developed a working definition of relational practices that encourage people to flourish. This review yielded a set of guiding questions that are central in this study:

- What in the professional development experiences that part-time faculty identify as positive made them positive?
- What were the lasting benefits?
- What elements of these positive experiences informed their subsequent teaching?
- What ways do they believe higher education could integrate significantly more support to part-time faculty in order to nurture their growth as educators?

Designing additional applications to meet the glaring need for professional development

in higher education's part-time faculty population is at the heart of my interest. It drives this study.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter One outlines the purpose of this study. A statement of the problem begins with a discussion of the challenging circumstances characterizing the part-timers' plight. The context and background of the study first describes professional development trends in higher education. An explication of the part-time faculty profile follows. Those initiatives in the literature that are currently addressing part-time faculty professional development needs are highlighted. Each of these sections provides a link to why higher education's attention to part-time faculty's professional development is vital.

Chapter Two reviews conceptual frameworks for the study. Brief discussions of adult development and adult learning theories begin the section in order to establish the interplay between these fields and learning relationships in how it can inform flourishing. The literature review then turns to a discussion of relational theory as conceptualized in a number of disciplines/contexts.

Chapter Three outlines a working model of relational qualities. A discussion of different learning community formats as a second type of learning relationship follows.

In Chapter Four, the methodology is described. It includes design, interview questions based on Appreciative Inquiry, study participants, and data collection. It concludes with brief sections on each participant's narrative vignette as a way to introduce the reader to part-timers prior to the interview analysis in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five analyzes participants' responses to interview questions. Analysis of the presence of relational qualities in participants' responses is integrated into this

discussion. The relationship between participants' identified positive professional development experiences and how these experiences inform their subsequent teaching concludes this chapter.

Chapter Six summarizes the study and makes recommendations for future research. It restates the growing need to address part-time faculty's professional development needs on a community level throughout higher education. It highlights support for the design of professional development models characterized by relational qualities. A general model is outlined based on the results of this study. Limitations and ethical considerations are noted. Recommendations for future research conclude this study.

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, it asks part-time faculty to identify positive professional development experiences. Identifying positive professional development experiences creates a context to identify what in those experiences participants experienced as positive, and further, what from these experiences informed participants' subsequent teaching. Historically, professional marginalization and devaluation, coupled with administrations' concerns about the effects of a growing part-time faculty population has left the research on this population virtually devoid of positive experience narratives. I sought part-timers' own words about their positive experiences and what they believe higher education needs to provide part-time faculty. I wanted to make visible this population's contribution to the academy. Bringing their voices to the fore is essential to this project.

The second purpose of this study is to explore participants' narratives for the presence of one or more relational qualities between part-time faculty and their employers. My interest stems from results in a previous study in which I reviewed literature in a number of fields that focused on relational qualities. From my reading, I identified relational awareness, critical reflection, mutuality, authenticity, the willingness to not know, and renewed intentionality as six qualities characteristic of a number of relational theory applications. This previous study confirmed the vital role relationships

play in enhancing a person's learning. Based on this literature review, I hypothesize that a learning relationship - grounded in relational qualities - provides a vehicle through which to encourage meaningful professional development for part-time faculty.

My goal in this project is to contribute to decreasing the part-timers' plight by proposing professional development in response to and driven by their wide-ranging needs. The results from this study suggest elements that inform a professional development design for part-time faculty that could have significant applicability. Based on these findings, I propose a professional development model in Chapter 6 that incorporates learning relationships characterized by relational qualities. The responsibility for the part-time faculty's professional development then rests on both the part-timer and the institutions employing part-timers. My hope is that this model contributes to the small but growing efforts urging this overdue transformation. While any transformation of attitudes will take time and unfailing effort, actively advocating for and working to meet part-time faculty's current professional development needs is vital to higher education's future.

Statement of the Problem

Well documented in the literature are the circumstances and consequences - the plight - part-time faculty face (Benjamin, 2003: Burk, 2000; Elman, 2003; Fulton, 2000; Leslie and Gappa, 1993; Leslie, 1998; Nutting, 2003; Weispfenning, 2000). Simply put, Fulton (2000) calls this plight "a regressive, unethical practice that strikes at the heart of academic quality" (p. 38). A number of aspects create this plight. Six aspects, cited below, intersect in the characterization of this plight. First, innumerable practical challenges arise for part-time faculty from the typical absence of an office, a telephone, a

computer, a copy machine, a fax machine, and administrative staff. Ironically, part-timers are criticized by some, including Benjamin (2003) for being "less accessible to students…they are less integrated with the campus culture" (p. 21). Some part-timers readily admit they are usually unable to attend department meetings, even when invited. A common reason for this is that those who teach in two or more institutions, or work full time and teach, must stay abreast of two or more sets of protocols, policies, and other pertinent details. But who can argue that the lack of physical space prohibits most part-timers from being more accessible in basic ways? This aptly illustrates the 'catch-22' part-timers face and exemplifies the complex interrelationship between aspects of their plight.

A second aspect is that part-time faculty are seldom provided with professional development opportunities or monies to participate in those opportunities. They must bear the often significant expense that comes with attending conferences, seminars, or institutes. Half- and full-day workshops, provided by faculty development-associated organizations are usually most within reach financially. Yet schedules and work commitments can preclude one's ability to participate in what is affordable and local. This reality results in a third aspect of their plight: part-time instructors self-direct most, if not all, of their professional development. Part-timers must depend primarily on self-initiative to obtain new knowledge and integrate it in a way that effectively builds on previous learning[2]. For some this is a fun, creative endeavor. For others, it challenges them in ways that may frustrate, overwhelm, or undermine their ability.

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[2] According to Cafferella and Zinn (1999), full-timers self-direct approximately one-third of their professional development endeavors. One might argue that this should not impede part-timers from learning what they need to learn to do their jobs well. Indeed, Lawler and King (2000) suggest that "faculty, by nature of their profession, are self-directed in their work, independent and autonomous in

A fourth factor in the part-timer's plight is the percentage (albeit unknown) of full-time faculty who believe that the part-timer is responsible (to varying degrees) for the increasing freeze and/or removal of full-time tenure track positions (Lyons, 2007). Cross and Goldenberg (2003) point out, however, that the part-timer's willingness to teach is not the sole factor in higher education's dilemma:

> Once a cohort of non-tenure-track faculty is in place, and once the university budget has absorbed the lower teaching costs (and used the savings for salary increases, new hiring, maintenance, new facilities, or whatever), it becomes almost impossible to retreat. Particularly in institutions that face annual reductions (or very small increases) in state funding, financial resources are not available to undo decisions made in the past, and the non-tenure track faculty lines become permanent (p. 57).

A second complaint some full-time faculty have is that part-time faculty are diluting efforts to improve tenure-track desirability (Thompson, 2003). Still others criticize part-time instructors for wanting greater equality (Fulton, 2000). Townsend (2003) argues that the growing use of part-time faculty "has…become a way to earn more in tuition revenue while providing less in education" (p. 31). The assumptions that courses taught by part-time faculty are quality-inferior, or that part-timers are "alter[ing] the character of higher education" (Cross and Goldenberg, 2003, p. 49) are among the attitudes and in truth the prejudices most-hard-hitting to the part-timer.

Other full-time faculty and some administrators hold the institution responsible

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getting their work done…Their training as scholars and researchers promotes these characteristics " (p. 14). The difference, however, is that full-time, tenure-track faculty have the *luxury* of self-directing significantly less of their professional development. Participating on committees, engagement in service to one's institution, attending conferences, and collegial relationships that develop over a period of time in a consistent environment contribute significantly as additional learning sources and avenues. This points to a significantly smaller need for full-time faculty to self-direct their learning.

for coming up with alternatives. Elman (2003) argues that "failure to create a culture that enables these faculty to be effective is inequitable, and...it compromises the educational experience of students and puts the integrity of the institution at risk (p. 73). Together these attitudes shed further light on the catch-22. Typically, part-time faculty are either not invited to department meetings, or they cannot attend due to time constraints. Yet when they can and do attend, they are not always welcomed with 'open arms'[3].

Further, references commonly used to refer to the part-time instructor are demoralizing, disempowering, and only serve to reinforce a negative and inaccurate perception of the part-timer. These references include invisible (Leslie and Gappa, 1993; Leslie, 1998), contingent (Naquin, 2002), temporary (Fulton, 2000), casual (Watters and Weeks, 1999), and sub-faculty (Langenberg, 1998).

Finally, and most demoralizing, is part-time instructors' pay[4], typically devoid of retirement options, health insurance, paid vacation days and drastically less than their full-time colleagues. Alperin (2005) gives an example in her review of adjunct instructors in the process of creating a union at George Washington University, Washington, DC:

> Saundra Rose Maley is one of those 21st century part-timers. She has been an adjunct in the English department since 1991, and cobbles together a livelihood at GW. For most of her 14 years she has taught freshman composition, with occasional forays into introductory courses in American and British literature. She is part-time, promised at least two courses per year, with partial benefits. This year, for teaching

[3] Participant Claude shares his story in Chapter 4.
[4] Salaries vary based on the type of academic setting and the discipline.

> five courses, she expects to earn $18,784, of which $2,750 is 'overload compensation' for teaching a higher-level course. To put her salary in perspective, consider that one year she was given an assistant professorship and earned $42,000—the same person, the same job, different title (Adjunct Advocate, AdjunctNation.com, retrieved 11/3/05 from http://www.adjunctnation.com/).

This pervasive and significant pay discrepancy only reinforces the attitudinal oppression and marginalization of this population.

Germane to this discussion is the recently growing number of 'full-time contingent'[5] positions offered by administrations, typically renewable on an annual basis. According to Jacobe (2006), these positions "are rising dramatically" (p. 44, www.AAUP.org). At first glance this position appears to dramatically improve the part-timers' plight. On the one hand, it increases status, courses taught, most likely provides office space, and at some institutions, health insurance. Further, having one place of employment and one department to learn about provides a much-needed sense of stability. On the other hand, the contingent position's annual renewal factor is an obvious drawback. It carries with it the yearly threat of loss. Depending on budget revisions and institutions' physical maintenance needs amidst other factors that must be considered, faculty in these positions run the risk of sudden termination. Since it is likely that the full-time contingent faculty had stopped teaching at least some, if not all, of the other courses they taught at other institutions on any regular basis, this could result in 'losing their place' or seniority at those other institutions.

Creation of the full-time contingent faculty position is among the few recent

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[5] 'Full-time' in this case usually means the instructor teaches three courses per semester. Typically, there are no additional responsibilities such as committee participation or university service, normally associated with tenure-track faculty positions.

strategies that addresses the plight of the part-timer. More accurately, the one aspect it unquestionably responds to is part-timers' grossly inadequate pay. It does not necessarily change full-time faculty's attitudes and possible resentment, and it continues to reinforce attitudes and perceptions by bearing the word 'contingent' in its title. It is possible that by teaching three courses in one semester in one department, a part-timer may obtain informal mentoring via spontaneous conversations or because certain faculty members take it upon themselves to make an effort. However it does not account for in a conscious and intentional way part-time faculty's professional development.

Higher education needs to debunk the myths inherent in part-time faculty marginalization. Primary among these myths is that part-time instructors are not good teachers. Although increasing numbers of administrators and full-time faculty express urgent concerns about part-time faculty's influence on student learning, Leslie and Gappa (1993) and the Sloan Report (1998) confirm this lack of evidence. Current research is needed to affirm or renounce this inflammatory issue.

Given the above circumstances, it is no wonder that the continuing lack of part-time faculty professional recognition has "produced a bitter, often angry, underclass in the academy" (Thompson, 2003, p. 31). There is no question that, as the part-time population grows, the disconnect between what is expected of them and what is provided to them to meet those expectations also grows. Baiocco & DeWaters (1998), Lawler and King (2000), and Lyons (2007) argue that professional development must routinely be reassessed and consequently redesigned to best assist faculty in 'keeping current.' Indeed, one finds growing evidence of higher education's commitment to providing best practices in professional development for its faculty (Cross, 1998; Richlin and Essington,

2004; Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). Yet the reality is that administrators are making this commitment only to full-time, tenure-track faculty. The academy must address this glaring omission of part-time faculty's value and contribution by including them in professional development opportunities.

Context and Background for the Study

Professional Development Trends in Higher Education

Of particular note to this study is a constellation of factors influencing higher education's practices over the last forty years. The first of these factors is a changing student population. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) observe a "shift from a youth-oriented society to an adult-oriented society… [is reinforced by the fact that]…older adults are also increasingly better educated, in better health, and economically better off that previous cohorts" (p. 7). Increasing recognition of socially constructed identities is transforming pedagogy and practice in numerous disciplines. Cross (1998) notes:

> Social construction conceives of knowledge not as something that is transferred in an authoritarian structure from teacher to student but rather as something that teachers and students work interdependently to develop. Thus it fosters active over passive learning, cooperation over competition, and community over isolation (p. 5).

The literature suggests a multitude of potentially complex classroom dynamics between students and teachers as a result (Kohl, 1991; Lee and Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Vacarr, 2001). Greater diversity in one's classes coupled with pedagogical and instructional practices invites new challenges and a range of consequences, requiring teachers to rethink previously effective approaches.

A changing population and an increasing recognition of social identities led

higher education administrators to reassess the quality of undergraduate education (Paulson and Feldman, 1995). This review birthed a movement based on the premise that faculty should value and develop their teaching practices with the same commitment and rigor with which they engage in scholarly research endeavors. Central to this movement has been Boyer's (1990) "scholarship of teaching and learning" [SoTL][6] in which he launched the argument for a "more inclusive view" of the scholar: "a recognition that knowledge is acquired through [four activities including] research...synthesis... practice and...teaching" (1990, p. 24, as cited in Angelo, 2001, p. 100). This inclusion formally urges faculty to examine both their teaching methods and their perceptions of their teaching pedagogy by asking administrations to programmatically and institutionally support this vision. Thus, higher education has essentially committed its members – staff, faculty, administrators, and students – a transformation which Tagg and Barr (1995) phrase 'from teaching organization to a learning organization'.

Senge (1990), whose quintessential *The fifth discipline* transformed how business managers perceived and managed their organizations during the 1990s, is a primary force in this shift in the academic community. Senge describes a learning organization as "one that connects its members closely to the mission, goals, and challenges of the organization" (p. 85). A learning organization is characterized by systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building a shared vision and team learning. Schulman (2000) adds that this new focus on teaching requires a kind of 'going meta', in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning

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[6] For a comprehensive review and current assessment of the SoTL's development, see McKinney, K. (2003). The scholarship of teaching and learning: Past lessons, current challenges, and future visions. In C. Wehlburg, & S. Chadwick-Blossey (Eds.), *To Improve the Academe*, Vol. 22: *Resources for faculty, instructional and organizational development* (pp. 3-19). Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press.

(p. 3). The transformation from teaching to learning organization expands the focus on what constitutes best practices in the learning context. Our previous focus on *how* we teach *what* we teach now includes *how we think about* how we teach what we teach.

As a result, the SoTL movement has contributed significantly to the design and implementation of new and renewed faculty professional development models. The learning community is one example. Senge's premises are proving foundational for specific models such as Cox's faculty learning communities [FLCs]. Cohort- and topic-based, these learning communities are formed with the goal to develop scholarship in teaching and learning, and to develop strategies for change on an institutional level. However, other existing learning community formats meet important faculty needs as well and include teaching circles (Shulman, 2000), communities of practice (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002), study circles (Schmoker, 2004), and circles of trust (Palmer, 2004).

A final point salient to this discussion is that the transition 'to learning organization' has caused a burgeoning of campus teaching and learning centers (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002) in addition to a tremendous expansion in what they offer faculty. Over a decade ago, Shulman (1993) argued teaching and learning centers conveyed a message that "...teaching is generic, technical, and a matter of performance; that it's not part of the community that means so much to most faculty, the interdisciplinary, disciplinary, professional community" (p. 2). Yet currently, the 'community' itself is front and center, as evidenced by the significant rise in different types of faculty learning communities teaching and learning centers provide.

It is evident that current trends in professional development for higher education faculty support best practices and ongoing assessment of those practices. This momentum is exciting; it illuminates our growing emphasis on how important faculty's professional development becomes, not only in teachers' flourishing, but in how it informs student learning (and potential flourishing). The tragedy of this inspiring movement is that for the most part, it excludes part-time faculty.

Significance of the Study

Two factors contribute to the significance of this study. First, part-time faculty professional development needs vary tremendously, making successful applicability of any one professional development model unlikely. Review of the two primary studies examining part-time faculty types serves to substantiate this point. For his investigation, Tuchman (1978) and his team interviewed over 3000 part-time faculty. Findings from this extensive interview process led Tuckman to identify seven types: *semi-retireds, graduate students, hopeful full-timers, full mooners* (those who hold another job at a minimum of 35 hours a week), *homeworkers* (those who work out of their home in order to take care of a relative or a child), *part-mooners* (those working two or more part-time jobs) *and part unknowners* (those whose motives for becoming part-time do not fall into any of the other categories).

A second more recent study which built on Tuchman's findings was Leslie and Gappa's (1993) project, designed to identify similar part-time faculty sub-groupings. These researchers interviewed 487 people including part-timers, department chairs, deans, and central administrators. They identified *career enders* (typically fully retired or transitioning to new career); *specialists or expert professionals* (works full-time in one's

field and often have advanced training; may be pursuing new contacts as well through teaching; income is not a necessity); *aspiring academics* (sometimes called 'freeway flyers' because they usually teach at more than one institution in their efforts to build their credentials toward someday acquiring a full time position); and *freelancers* (typically holds a number of part-time jobs that are interrelated; adept in "what one learns in one area they put to use elsewhere" (p. 63).

Both studies reinforce the tremendous diversity in both type and career trajectory among educators in this population. Caffarella and Zinn's (1999) research on barriers and supports in the careers of *any* faculty type further suggests that professional and personal needs differ *within* one faculty type as well. A prime example is Leslie and Gappa's (1993) freelancers. Some freelancers love the flexibility and variety that can come with working in a number of settings, yet bemoan their inability outside of actually teaching to any active or ongoing affiliation with their employing institution. Other freelancers view this inability to participate as a benefit, relieved they are not required to attend a designated number of workshops or faculty meetings per year in order to stay in the good graces of their employers (Smallwood, 2001).

The differences between a novice part-time educator and a seasoned part-time educator illustrate a second example. These examples are only two of the possible differences among part-time faculty that highlight the complexity informing part-time faculty professional development needs. Any model designed to address part-timers' needs must take this complexity into account.

The second factor significant in this study is the fact that there are so few institutions currently implementing professional development initiatives specifically for

their part-timers. In fact, the literature reveals keen support for the part-timers who teach in community colleges (Lyons, 2007) but not in four-year institutions. In fact, many four-year institutions are focusing on professional development needs among all faculty groups *except* part-timers: new and junior faculty, graduate teaching assistants, future faculty, and (less often) mid-career and senior faculty" (Lambert and Cox, 2007, p. 217). With this said, some institutions among this nominal group have made it a priority to address part-time faculty needs. Waters and Weeks' (1999) surveyed and interviewed approximately 800 part-time faculty in order to study what motivates and what deters part-time faculty participation in professional development. This process increased collaboration between themselves and university administrators[7]. At Miami University (Ohio), Lambert and Cox (2007) developed a program based on part-time faculty-identified needs, yet a surprisingly small number of part-time faculty participated the first year. The developers concluded through further needs assessment, that continuous assessment and ongoing dialogue has to accompany any program in order for it to potentially succeed. More specifically, Lambert and Cox's findings reiterate that faculty developers need a basic grasp of those aspects typical in the part-timers' plight and that their own part-time faculty face. Areas requiring examination are how their part-timers' challenges interface with issues, challenges, and needs unique to that developer's institution (Lambert and Cox, p. 221).

Other professional development initiatives illustrate some variation in what and how administrations are providing these opportunities to part-time faculty. Frakt and

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[7] Although administrators did not increase part-time faculty salaries, participants formed an association for part-time instructors and developed a strategic plan that included goals for future part-time professional development programs (p. 11).

Castagnera (2000) outline a pilot at Rider University, which recognizes seniority through its tiered system of *priority* adjuncts, *preferred* adjuncts, and *other* adjuncts, thus increasing course salary and making available congruent levels of health coverage. Metropolitan State College of Denver (Krepar, 2004) provides part-timers increased communication options, curriculum revision opportunities with a tenured faculty partner, technology training, research monies, seniority recognition, and merit and monetary awards as recognition for part-time instructors' exemplary performance.

A growing number of institutions are using mentoring models with their part-time instructors. Lesley University's Creative Arts in Learning Program and its Teacher Education Program are two examples. Others include MacEwan College (Zutter, 2007) and University of Louisville (Hutti, Rhodes, Allison and Lauterbach, 2007). Although not framed as a formal mentoring model, Otterman College employs an approach that includes mentoring as a primary option. Weispfenning (2000) works with each new part-time faculty member in "moderately structured one-on-one meetings" (p. 9). He relies on department chairs for mentoring needs, and department assessments of how the individual instructor is faring. Weispfenning (2000) has an initial meeting with instructors and follows up with each on an as-needed basis. He also observes them one month after the beginning of their appointment. These initiatives strongly suggest a growing interest among some institutions to acknowledge and address part-time faculty's professional development needs.

These current initiatives are a mere beginning, and act in some cases as only an antidote to the symptoms; they do not address the systemic problem inherent in the part-timer's plight. Higher education must take seriously the part-time instructor's

professional development needs, and do so on a large scale. A system-wide commitment to ongoing investigation on an organizational level of ways to meet part-time faculty's professional development needs is essential.

Learning Relationships that Invite Flourishing

Flourishing connotes expansion or growth. In a learning context, it connotes deep learning or significant development. Relational qualities and behaviors that encourage learning and development represent a growing area of interest in a number of fields. How this interplay enhances adult learning and development has been the basis for tremendous research over the past decade. The number of contexts exploring how relationship-based pedagogy informs learning and development at other important points in individuals' lives are mounting. Germane to this study is a review of the literature exploring methods through which people relate to one another in learning environments, how these methods affect learning, and how that learning leads to further learning, development, or flourishing.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter reviews conceptual frameworks for the study. It begins with a brief discussion of adult development theory and adult learning theory. As they increasingly interface in the literature, these theoretical bodies inform working conceptualizations about how a learning relationship might encourage faculty flourishing. The literature review then turns to a discussion of relational theory as conceptualized in a number of disciplines/contexts. A summary of how adult learning that takes place in a relational context fosters flourishing and subsequently adult development concludes this chapter.

How Adult Development and Adult Learning Inform One Another

Current Adult Development Perspectives

Adult development conceptualizations are increasingly informed by constructivist-developmental perspectives. Having established the inadequate nature of development theory which was based on androcentric premises, the work of Gilligan (1982) and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule (1986) ignited a plethora of research that has transformed our understanding about what drives development. How adults develop is now understood as a set of identities that are socially constructed in response to one's social world (Taylor, Marienau & Fiddler, 2000). Although still central to understanding an individual's worldview, prior markers such as age, professional status, or specific experiences are no longer considered 'representative' of a specific

developmental stage, phase, position or sequence. The literature continues to evolve in this direction, recognizing the dynamic complexity that multiple identities contribute to one's development (Chavez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999; Goldberger, 1996; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, Rossiter, 1999).

The fact that these theories, based on different constructs, overlap in their descriptions of adult development is important to this discussion. Two theories illustrate this importance. First, in her ego development theory (linear-based) Loevinger (1976) describes individuals characterizing her *autonomous* stage (sixth of seven) as those who have developed the capacity to acknowledge and cope with inner conflict, view emotional interdependence as inevitable, see reality as complex and multifaceted, and recognize others' need for autonomy (Loevinger, 1976, p. 47). Kegan's (1982) characterization of the *fourth stage* in his stage of consciousness theory (constructivist meaning-making), identifies individuals who believe in their own ideology and belief system, who can conceive events and experiences in multiple ways, who can take responsibility for their own judgments, and who are unconstrained by society's beliefs and values or others' point of view. These adults are self-regulating, self-authoring, autonomous, and can separate themselves from others' demands; they retain their own point of view and are comfortable with others' differences[8].

Research that describes teacher development illustrates a similar progression. For example, Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) aptly define a new teacher as the *novice*, whose perceptions and behaviors characterize "adherence to taught rules and little discretionary judgment" (p. 37). Subsequent (as cited in Wright and Associates, 1995) the *advanced*

[8] Additional development theories, such as Perry's (1969) *ethical and intellectual development*, Gilligan's (1982) *moral/relational development*, and King and Kitchener's (1994) *cognitive development* describe some of these characteristics as well.

beginner, the *competent*, the *proficient* and finally, the *expert,* who "no longer relies on rules and guidelines and has an intuitive grasp of situations based on deep understanding, knows what is possible and only uses analytic approaches in new situations when new problems occur… [And] operates from an implicit and unconscious base of expertise" (p. 37)

Similarly, Robertson's (2000) theory of *systemocentrism* characterizes new teachers as *egocentric* because they tend to use a one-dimensional, teacher-centered style, focusing primarily on content mastery. As their sense of mastery in the teaching context grows, they become increasingly *aliocentric*, using a more two-dimensional, learner-centered style. Increasing mastery at this stage leads one to incorporate a sy*stemocentric* approach. Using a three-dimensional, teacher-learner-centered style, this teacher "manage[s] complex, dynamic, psycho-social-physical systems" (p. 123)

Similarities between these stages suggest that, whether linear- or constructivist-based, theorists continue to understand development as characterized by increasing multicontextuality. As MacKeracher (2002) states, "cognitive complexity is a developmental characteristic" (p. 122). This recognition is increasingly relevant when considering a learning context. Most educators would agree that their goal is to teach in ways they hope will foster and/or further encourage students' cognitive development. Some would say they teach to foster/further encourage more wholistic development in their student that includes not only cognition and intellect but emotion or affect, and even spirituality. Higher education's transformation to a learning organization makes fostering students' ability to understand multiple perspectives that much more relevant, and there is

no question that teachers are instrumental to whether or not, and to what degree, development occurs.

Constructivist-developmental tenets substantiate the growing view that development is driven by how individuals make meaning of their experiences (with or without support/input from others). One cannot assume, however, a rate of or extent to which individuals develop in a specific environment based on their previous experience. Reports noted in the introduction to the study illustrate how some part-time faculty find themselves unnerved, unsure, or unable to fully access competencies and levels of multicontextuality well established in a different context.

What current adult development theories bear out appears to have significant applicability to the professional development for part-time faculty. Designing effective models for this population requires a spirit of inquiry - a curiosity - about part-timers' experiences. Understanding their perspective and what they believe they need professionally would inform the professional development that is most meaningful and facilitative in their development.

Current Adult Learning Perspectives

Theorists who have informed our thinking about how adults learn are noteworthy for two reasons. First, Knowles (1980, 1990) cultivated an acknowledgement of how differences between traditional primary/secondary learners and adult learners inform best practices for teaching adults. Mezirow (1991) and Tennant and Pogson (1995) helped to establish that learning is more meaningful to adults when they can include prior experience, how they integrate that experience, and how it informs their current learning. Mezirow suggests that the process of learning is set in motion when adults are challenged

by a 'disorienting dilemma', and that this leads to a number of possible kinds of learning, often 'perspective transformation.' Freire's (1971) emancipatory learning theory is primary example. He argues that the ongoing interplay between dialogue and critical reflection, where learners are challenged to critically reflect on their perspectives through active dialogue - as opposed to a banking model of education which relies solely on transmitting knowledge – is foundational to meaningful adult learning.

Others theorizing how adult learning happens (Bruner, 1986; Houle, 1961; Knowles, 1980, 1990; Knox, 1984; Kolb, 1984; Taylor, Marienau & Fiddler, 2000) have contributed to expanding the parameters regarding what informs best practices in adult learning. Further, technological abilities that now allow for brain and magnetic resonate imaging (MRI) have informed our understanding of the relationship between emotions and learning (Damasio, 2000). Elias, Zinns, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Kessler, Schwab-Stone and Shriver (1997) explain:

> Processes we had considered pure 'thinking' are now seen as phenomena in which the cognitive and emotional aspects work synergistically. Brain studies show…that memory is linked to specific events and linked to social and emotional situations, and that the latter are integral parts of larger units of memory that make up what we learn and retain, including what takes place in the classroom (p. 3)

Identifying a relationship between cognition and affective aspects of learning highlights how meaningful adult learning is more encouraged for many learners by a wholistic approach. Inviting previous experience both in and outside of a classroom invites emotion as well as cognitive responses. Although grounded in differing premises, adult learning perspectives take into account adults' life experiences, their subjective lenses,

and the importance about how they make meaning of their learning experiences and how this influences future learning. It follows that these overarching premises are integral to any design of professional development for part-time faculty in that they point to what formats will take into account what will be potentially the most meaningful to the part-time faculty population.

How Learning in a Relational Context Informs Adult Development

Well substantiated at this point is the reciprocal relationship between adult learning and adult development, and that this relationship is a tapestry woven of one's unique experiences. Based on this adult development/adult learning interface, it follows that whether part-time faculty merely survive, grow, or flourish through some form of professional development will depend on a number of factors. In addition to those factors identified above, their learning style and the physical aspects of the learning environment may matter. The adult development/adult learning interface suggests that the degree to which part-time faculty potentially benefit from professional development experiences will also lie in their ability to initiate and/or have access to opportunities for dialogue and critical reflection about these learning experiences.

Important in this consideration is the concept of intentionality. Intention refers to exercising and maintaining a meta-awareness of learners and then designing learning experiences based on this meta-awareness. In their discussion of teaching adult learners, Taylor, Marineau & Fiedler (2000) propose that educators who teach with intention considers now-established adult learner characteristics, recognizes the importance of understanding each learner's subjective lens, identifies similarities and differences among adult learners, and reflects on how they may influence individual and group learning.

will most effectively foster greater levels of multicontextuality. Reconsidering part-time faculty professional development to include intentional practices appears promising. Institutions that intentionally create connections with their part-time faculty in order to better understand their professional development needs may benefit both the institution and the part-timer. A connection grounded in bi-directional communication as opposed to what is typically one-directional (informational mailings and paychecks) could serve as an anchor for some instructors. It appears fully possible that establishing confidence in bidirectional communication might free up a percentage of the energy some spend managing other aspects of one's life around a lifestyle with little of any professional security, in addition to operating in a vacuum. Based on the literature, the interplay apparent between the adult development/adult learning interface and professional development which is meaningful suggests that some form of relationship may serve as an important link for many part-timers. Relational theory as conceptualized in different contexts is reviewed in order to identify relational qualities that appear most common among these theories.

Relational Theories and Their Applications

Theory that seeks to identify best practices for growth-enhancing relationships between two people, or between people within groups, can be found in a number of disciplines. These perspectives are discussed in the following section.

Current Relational Theory Perspectives

Foundational to any theory of human development is discussion of how development is influenced by the ways we relate to another human being. Yet to facilitate understanding of the historical landscape in the field of psychology, one must

distinguish between what psychoanalytic theorists term *intrapsychic*, or within one's self, and *interpsychic*, between self and others. A primarily intrapsychic leaning informed the majority of conceptualizations during the first half of the twentieth century, beginning with Freud's theory of psychosexual development. This perspective posits that the environment, including all relationships, are secondary to internal forces – drives, instincts, or strivings, depending on the theoretical premise - influencing one's development. Erikson's (1963) psychosocial development maintained more of a balance between the intra- and interpsychic processes, as did Kohlberg's (1969) theory of moral development, (although excluding women in the participant pool made these partial theories at best). As American culture championed itself on individualism, maturity and psychological health were characterized by increasing levels of autonomy and individuation.

Birthing a psychological perspective that placed the relationship front and center in the development process evolved through American culture's sociopolitical movements - specifically the civil rights and women's movements (Spencer, 2002; Robb, 2006). A feminist perspective in psychology also took root. Miller (1976) and Chodorow (1978) were among the first whose work established a feminist psychology in its own right. Miller (1976) noted that the ways women tend to feel empowered – through relationship, cooperation, and expressing one's emotions – were minimized by values touted by our individualistic culture[9]. Gilligan's (1982, 1990) research on girls' moral development strengthened this feminist lens by substantiating girls' and women's need for relationships with other females in which they are free to develop and use critical

[9] Miller (1976) argued that patriarchal ideologies arrested both men and women's development; however, her work was focused primarily on women's loss of their authentic selves.

thinking order to learn and develop. Belenky et al's (1986) research validated an epistemological difference between women's and men's ways of thinking and perceiving and thus, learning and development of voice. Indeed, this developing body of research "made the centrality of relationships in psychological theory visible..." (Spencer, 2002, p. 5).

Relational psychology constructs have taken hold in the therapeutic context as well. Emerging feminist psychologies situated the client and the therapist in a sociopolitical context. Through this lens both clients' and therapists' identities became the vehicle through which to facilitate clients' identification, understanding and work on their issues.

It created a distinction between Roger's (1961) one-dimensional approach and a relational authenticity informed by an inclusion of the therapist's personhood in the therapeutic relationship Miller and Striver's (1997) framework, called the Relational/Cultural Model, is based on the premise that "relationships with others are not viewed as a vehicle for reaching the developmental goal of an individuated self, but rather the active participation in mutually empathic relationships itself becomes the goal of development" (as cited in Spencer, 2002, p. 6). This model was informed by their original *self-in-relation* model which situated mutual empathy and connection within the therapeutic relationship as a valued goal (Jordan & Dooley, 2000).

Jordan (2004, p. 14) suggests that *relational awareness* and *relational competence* (Jordan's italics) are two pillars of growth-enhancing relationships. Relational awareness - "being attentive to self, the other, and the relationship" – moves a relationship toward relational competence – "the ability to 'move' someone or a relationship grounded in the

"emotional, cognitive, and behavioral realm." Jordan states that the concept of *mutuality* is essential; it "involves allowing oneself to be open to the influence of the other person and to be willing to respond to the person's unique ways of engaging in the relationship." Equally important is Jordan's emphasis on power-over versus power-with; relational competence can only develop in a relationship between two people who share equal power. The fact that Jordan (2004) and Fletcher (2004) are applying the RCT model to contexts beyond the therapeutic setting indicates it or some version of it could be applicable to the part-time faculty population. Spencer (2002) believes the trend these relational theories and their applications illustrate "represent a paradigm shift within psychology from... [seeing] healthy psychological development as a progression toward increasing self-differentiation, autonomy and independence, to one which assumes that we are fundamentally relational..." (Spencer, 2002, p. 2). Benefits derived from relationships established with relational qualities are important to the discussion framing this research. These relational models suggest applications to part-time faculty development, e. g. the institution and the part-time faculty are subject narrators both contributing to what can potentially become a more dynamic learning relationship as opposed to a one-way transmission of information.

Mortiboys' (2006) discussion of social and emotional learning in higher education, a limited yet blossoming body of research addressing its implications beyond high school, argues that "so much of teaching [at this level] is based on the assumption that the learners are present cognitively but not otherwise" (p. 80). Indeed, the public aspect of the classroom coupled with the range of dynamics possible between teacher and each learner heightens the potential for strong feelings. Mortiboys (2006) argues that

conditions that contribute to the social and emotional climate of higher education include the teacher's behavior; the students' behavior; the physical experience of the learners; the language used by the teacher; the materials and how they are used; and the specific activities learners are asked to participate in. Their responses to material, their instructor's evaluation of their work and to them as a person, and their degree (or lack of) interest in the subject can result in frustration, shame, excitement, thrill, inspiration, and hope. "Formal learning environments are emotional spaces. At the very least, fear, pride, anger, disappointment embarrassment, humiliation, excitement, and anticipation can occur..." (Mortiboys, 2006, p. 76).

What happens when we are encouraged by our learning environments to openly bring more than our cognitions into the learning relationship? Mortiboys (2006) emphasizes that "a positive social and emotional environment makes learners...more likely to risk, explore, make connections and inquire. It...assists[s] learners in recognizing the emotional dimension in their own learning... [and] make[s] them more able to voice their feelings" (p. 32). Neuroscience's recent discoveries confirm that learners bring their cognitive *and* emotional selves to the learning environment, regardless of age (Damasio, 2000). When a learner is comfortable enough to voice feelings, opinions, and questions, it follows that he or she is potentially freed up to focus more fully on learning itself.

Showing empathy and developing strong listening skills are likely to contribute to a more effective learning relationship if the learner feels their teacher is more approachable, that he or she cares more about whether or not students are learning.

Emancipatory Learning

Based on his advocacy for the Brazilian peasants in the1960s, Freire (1971) developed his theory of *emancipatory learning* based on the belief that humans' primary vocation is that of 'becoming more fully human'. He argued that teachers who primarily lecture are bringing a one-way narrative to the learning relationship:

> Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits...This relationship involves a narrating subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students). The contents, whether values or empirical dimensions of reality, tend in the process of being narrated to become lifeless and petrified (p. 52).

Freire argues that this one-way narrative 'robs' learners of a sociopolitical emergence of consciousness, or *conscientization*, which in turn prohibits their opportunity to learn fully and authentically. Because learners are viewed as 'objects of assistance,' a banking education resists dialogue and inhibits creativity; it domesticates the intentionality of consciousness by isolating consciousness from the world. A problem-solving model positions learners as critical thinkers; only by engaging in dialogue – indispensable to the act of cognition – can they can truly reflect and take action upon reality. This invitation to authenticity as what supports one's vocation of becoming more fully human

Emancipatory learning aptly illustrates relational premises. Only in a context where learners are invited to actively dialogue can they generate authentic questions and opinions. Only when teachers validate their students' efforts to find and establish

themselves in this process do they develop greater trust and confidence, in their ability to learn, integrate their learning, develop their own perspectives and think critically about these perspectives. Since we know that reflecting on and sharing life experience in a learning context makes learning more meaningful, inviting adult learners to narrate is essential. Emancipatory learning is liberating learning: learning that frees us to find our authenticity in opinion and voice.

hooks' (1994) work, significantly informed by Freire's[10] premises, places greater emphasis on the teacher-learner relationship. By positioning the teacher as learner, teacher and learner are simultaneously engaged in self-actualization[11]. Also informing hooks' pedagogy is Thich Nhat Hanh's *engaged pedagogy*, which is grounded in the belief that when the teacher successfully maintains the goal of well-being for both teacher and learner, both can take risks and share narratives; both bring their whole self to the classroom. Hooks emphasizes "...to teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin" (p. 13). By expanding on Freire's cognitive lens to include an emphasis on "mind, body and spirit" (hooks, 1997, p. 14), hooks places the relationship between teacher and learner(s) at the center of meaningful learning.

Relational Theories and Mentoring

Mentoring enjoys a long history of serving to train those new to a field, professional position, or craft. Traced back to Homer's *Odyssey*, in which Homer

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[10] hooks credits Freire for fostering her ability to complete *Teaching to transgress*, calling it "the concrete manifestation of my struggle with the question of moving from object to subject, the very problem that Paolo posed (p. 53).

[11] hooks conceptualizes this similarly to Freire's 'conscientization'

educated and supported Telemachus while his father was away (Daloz, 1998), the mentor is a wise guide invested in the professional development of the protégé. Buckley and Zimmerman (2003) state "a committed relationship between two people, one young or inexperienced and the other possessing knowledge or experience" (p. 2).

Historically, mentoring relationships have been primarily one-directional. The seasoned faculty member takes the new faculty member under her wing and guides her through the teaching, research, and responsibilities maze that full-time faculty navigate. However, Moirs (2006) points out problems inherent in this model. In the public school setting, for example, Moirs observes that designs for public school mentoring programs have been based on a belief that

> ...new teacher mentors are ready-made. Thus, mentor selection is haphazard and professional development often missing or extremely limited. Furthermore, the professional development that may be provided rests on limited conceptions of the mentor as learner, [instead]...providing a technical/manual approach that reduces the mentor to a technician and mentoring to strategies and tips, rather than situating mentoring in complex contexts where issues collide and compete (p. 8).

Moirs' critique suggests the inherent and multifaceted nature of this relationship. A one-directional approach to mentoring impinges on the mentor's potential to benefit; the structure compartmentalizes the mentor and mentee roles with results similar to Freire's (1971) banking model.

Yet newer mentoring models reflect use of relational practices. Mentor and mentee are increasingly framing their relationship as a two-dimensional, dynamic professional development relationship (Galbraith & Cohen, 1995). According to Moirs

(2006), teachers are becoming "change agents, reflective practitioners, collaborative colleagues, and lifelong learners -- educators who are student centered, equity focused, and constructivist" (p. 8). A review of some child and youth mentoring programs supports Moirs' (2006) claim. Students' mentoring needs are given greater consideration when pairing them with a specific mentor. This intentional pairing is based on race (Utsey, Howard &Williams, 2003), ethnicity (Yancey, 1998), sexual orientation (Jucovy, 2000), and gender (Philip & Henry, 1996).

Insomuch as mentoring studies have informed best practices, Johnson and Ridley (2004) point out that the majority of studies examining the pros and cons of mentoring are based on data from perspective of the mentee. Consequently, their research examining mentors' viewpoints about mentoring provides new information and lends support for a relational context. From their extensive literature review they 'distilled' facets from the mentoring literature to fifty-seven elements necessary for best practices, group in six categories:

- what excellent mentors do (*matters of skill*);
- traits of excellent mentors (*matters of style and personality*);
- arranging the mentor-protégé relationship (*matters of beginning*);
- knowing thyself as mentor (*matters of integrity*);
- when things go wrong (*matters of restoration*); and
- welcoming change and saying goodbye (*matters of closure*).

Johnson and Ridley cite "sense of humor, warmth, humility, and extraversion" among those personality traits mentors believe are most important. One might take issue with any one of these qualities being *required*. The degree of humor, warmth, humility and

extraversion a mentee might appreciate in her mentor depends on the mentee's personality. For example, she might prefer someone more introverted. Insomuch as the matching of mentors with mentees has not involved personality and learning style assessment, what does appear critical is a mentor's strong communication and social skills (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

Current mentoring pedagogy appears to increasingly support the idea that what makes these relationships most effective is when both mentee and mentor see themselves as learners. The research bears out that working collaboratively on how to support mentee's development increases the potential for both to learn and develop. The fact that mentoring is a learning model used with increasing success (Cohen, 1998; Daloz, 1998; Johnson & Ridley, 2004; Menges, 1999; Spencer, 2000; Sweeney, 2003; Zachary, 2000) in so many contexts lends tremendous support for the role it plays in service to people flourishing.

Relational Theory and Teacher Formation

A second format offered as professional development for teachers is Palmer's (1998, 2004) Teacher Formation work. In response to the lack of attention he saw administrators give their public school teachers' 'inner life', Palmer designed and began teaching teacher formation workshops or what he originally called the Courage to Teach (CTT), over a decade ago[12]. Palmer's central premise is that although teachers meet for any number of reasons within a given day/week/month, their minimal relationships with others and themselves leaves no avenue for renewal. Without opportunities for renewal we become increasingly separated form others and ourselves, living a 'divided life':

[12] Parker reports his many years participating in the Quaker community as a primary influence in his CTT seminars design.

> ...when...we lose touch with one another, the self atrophies and we lose touch with ourselves as well. Lacking opportunities to be ourselves in a web of relationships, our sense of self disappears, leading to behaviors that further fragment our relationships and spread the epidemic of inner emptiness (Palmer, 2004, p. 39).

In response, Palmer developed teacher formation as a learning format grounded in relational practices, encouraging relationships between people and a deeper relationship with self. It is practiced in a number of formats, including a two-year/eight-weekend retreat series, one-weekend retreats, and day-long workshops. Vital to one's successful formation is adherence to relational practices Parker (1998, 2004) calls the *touchstones*[13], which participants learn through the presentation of and modeling by retreat facilitators. Participants are asked to abide by these guidelines in their interactions with others and themselves throughout retreat weekends:

- Come to the work with all of the self
- Presume welcome and extend welcome
- Participation is an invitation, an opportunity, not a demand
- No fixing
- Openness to learning from each other
- When the going gets tough, turn to wonder
- Speak for yourself
- Listen to the silence
- Let our time together remain confidential within the group
- Consider that it is possible to emerge from our time together refreshed.

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[13] CTT's Touchstones are similar to what are called ground rules in other settings.

Using these guidelines supports participants' way of relating that fosters their ability to 'form' their 'true self'. They feel permission to drop ways of relating that are expected in social settings, and are invited to listen to the silence so as to hear what is underneath the busy chatter, the *shoulds*, and the *oughts* in one's typical way of relating. Also integral to the format is the alternating periods in community and in solitude incorporated into most CTT formats. Palmer (2004) states that "to understand true self – which knows who we are in our inwardness and whose we are in the larger world – we need both the interior intimacy that comes with solitude and the otherness that comes with community" (p. 54).

Intrator and Scrnbner (1998) observe that the value of CTT lies in its ability to provide many a transformational professional development experience. "Evoking the inner life of our teachers – that is, engaging teachers in activities that cultivate their capacity to teach with greater consciousness, self-awareness, and integrity – is a necessary condition for successful professional development" (p. 190). It is evident that this environment, supported by the touchstones, invites participants the space and encouragement to listen to what the silence allows and

Relational Theory at the Core of Professional Development for Part-Time Faculty

Constructivist-developmental perspectives have led to significantly greater consideration of the influence relationship can have in a learning context. MacKeracher (2002) highlights the fact that coming to understand the role relationship can play in one's learning lends significant support for how to foster flourishing in adult learning. Part-time faculty stand to benefit tremendously from some form of learning relationship. Having been provided little or no relationship previously with their employing institutions, some part-time faculty will likely find this opportunity a powerful one. To

identify relationship as a useful and meaningful aspect of professional development for part-time faculty is to provide them one more option for how they can obtain what they need to be better educators. The intention of the researcher is not to imply that a learning relationship is required for all part-time faculty to develop professionally. To assume this would be to denounce key premises discussed above regarding individual personality, and years of teaching experience. It is a given that the range of need for relationship in this context varies greatly. However, in light of what the literature suggests, the opportunity to engage in a professional development-based learning relationship, even a minimal level, provides two things. First, it gives part-time instructors a chance beyond surviving to grow and even potentially flourish. Second, providing part-time faculty with the option to engage to varying degrees with an institution-affiliated individual recognizes part-time faculty as a valuable majority, essential to the future of higher education. Ultimately it shows that higher education acknowledges the consequences of part-time faculty marginalization and commits to their inclusion.

CHAPTER 3

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH RELATIONSHIP

This chapter presents two learning relationship models and the implications of their application to part-time faculty professional development. The first model is conceived by the researcher and presented as a working model. Characterized by six relational qualities identified as most common among relational theory applications reviewed in Chapter 2, the model is discussed in the context of the relationship between part-time faculty and their employing institution.

The second model is the learning community. A review of literature of current definitions and models, common characteristics, what learning communities provide participants, and how participants benefit are reviewed. The chapter concludes with discussion of the applicability of learning community models to part-time faculty in order to foster flourishing.

Application of Relational Theory to Professional Development for Part-Time Faculty

The literature points overwhelmingly to the potential for positive outcomes when teachers, mentors, and therapists consciously apply relational practices to the relationship between themselves and those they work with. These positive outcomes result from two-way communication in which teachers, mentors and therapists see themselves as learners as well. It is important for part-time teachers to identify and understand their pedagogical perspective and how this informs their teaching. Learning experiences that invite

narratives and encourage dialogue about meaning making are as important for faculty as learners as they are for students as learners. It suggests substantial support is needed for providing professional development that integrates relational approaches. Thus, part-time professional development grounded in relational practices offers tremendous opportunities for learning, growth, and flourishing.

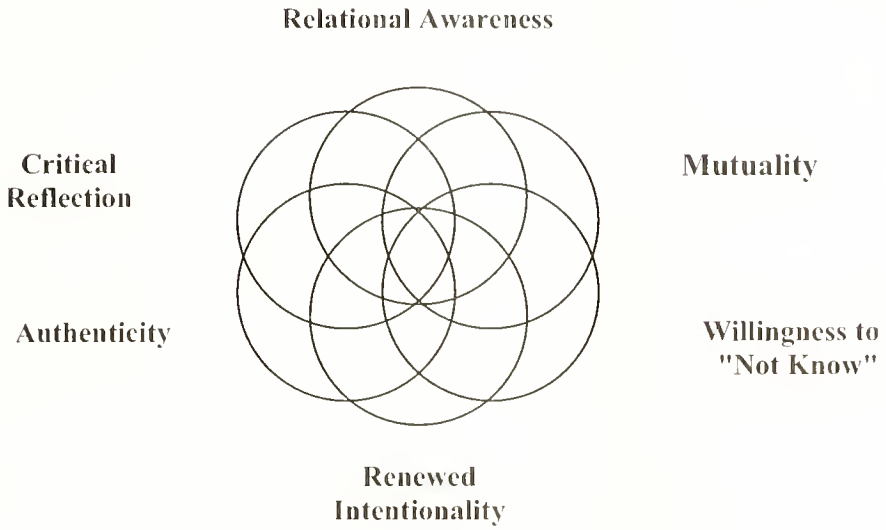
Relational Qualities that Foster Flourishing in a Learning Environment

The review of relational theories and their applications underscores the potential professional development holds for part-time faculty who are given opportunities to reflect and narrate in a relational framework. A number of qualities characteristic among the contexts reviewed above appear to best support the possibility for flourishing. Qualities identified as common among relational theory applications reviewed in Chapter 2 are: *relational awareness, critical reflection, mutuality, authenticity, the willingness to not know, and renewed intentionality*. Figure 1 below serves as an illustration of these qualities, their interdependence with one another, and a shifting among and between them in a continuous movement. The speed and movement trajectory among and between the qualities is solely a manifestation of the specific relationship between those individuals in the learning relationship. This model is conceptualized as a starting point toward broadening the definition and discussion of relational practices in professional development for the part-time faculty. Each quality is defined below in the context of a professional development relationship between the part-time instructor and the employing institution.

Figure 1

Relational Qualities That Facilitate Part-Time Faculty Flourishing

A Working Model



Relational Awareness

One quality consistent in the literature is relational awareness. Jordan (2004) defines relational awareness as "being attentive to self, the other, and the relationship" (p. 14). First, being attentive to one's self is foundational in order for both liaison and faculty to 'come to the table' with goals, objectives, needs and ideas. Second, being attentive to each other suggests a willingness to hear each other's goals, objectives, needs and ideas. When both narrate, both engage in the relationship from this perspective (Freire, 1971). Engaging with another from a place of relational awareness means that either persons or parties frame the relationship as one both individuals invite each other's perspective because both believe that each has something to provide the other.

Whether or not the people/parties develop what Jordan (2004) calls *relational competence* is possible but not required. Jordan defines relational competence as "the

ability to…'move' someone or a relationship in the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral realm" (p. 14). She elaborates:

> … [Relational competence] involves vision, philosophy, emotional and cognitive skills, and the development of relational proactiveness. There is a relational problem-solving in which the power of dialogue, of asking for help, and of sharing uncertainty is openly acknowledged (p. 20).

Given that relationships in most contexts typically require time to develop, it follows that part-time faculty and the employing institutions need ample opportunity to first establish and develop relational awareness, particularly in light of the infrequency with which the people/parties might meet. Further, some part-time faculty may, while appreciative of the opportunity to engage in a learning relationship, choose to do so at a minimum because they have less of a need or have other established sources. Developing relational competence is a reasonable goal, achieved and maintained by an intentional, continuous, developmental process that takes place in the learning relationship.

Critical Reflection

The second quality in the working model is critical reflection. Theorists of adult learning (Brookfield, 1990, 1995; Cranton, 1996, 2001, 2005; Mezirow, 2000), adult development (Clark & Caffarella, 1999; Kegan, 1984, 1995; Rossiter, 1999) organizational management (Schon, 1983; Senge, 1990; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002) unanimously point to critical reflection as pivotal to individuals' learning and development. In his reflection-in-action theory, Schon (1983) proposed that the act of reflecting on their teaching when actually teaching provides teachers a most effective way to reshape their teaching practices. Other conceptualizations of this in-the-moment

reflection include Boud and Walker (1992), who frame it as noticing and intervening; Tremmel (1993), who defines it as a kind of mindfulness, or paying attention to what we are thinking and feeling in the moment; and Nuerburger (1994), who sees it similarly to Schon but adds that when reflecting in critical ways, we draw on a number of knowledge funds including spiritual, intuitive, instinctual, and analytic or sensory knowledge. Similarly, Cranton (1996) believes we critically reflect through a number of means including problem-solving, as an intuitive process, as a result of interacting with others, and as a developmental process.

The ability to – and consistent practice of – critical reflection becomes the vehicle through which we understand and manage our own emotions, generate solutions to problems, and communicate effectively. In a relational context exercising critical reflection gives depth to the awareness each has of the other. Critical reflection as a quality is particularly salient to this study because part-time faculty typically reflect in large part by themselves which leaves them vulnerable to the potential dangers inherent in thinking 'in a vacuum.' Being able to share their reflections supports greater potential for their successfully integrating the meaning they make from that reflecting and, consequently, for new awareness, new understanding, or a revised lens/perspective.

Mutuality

Relational awareness and critical reflection work closely with mutuality. When mutuality is valued in a relationship, both people see the other as a subject (Freire, 1971) in that relationship. Both bring perspectives to the table with an interest not simply in telling the other person, but sharing, listening, responding and taking into account the other's perspective. This mutuality challenges the central importance and value our

culture has historically placed on power-over relationships. Traditionally in these relationships, one automatically has power over by virtue of age, experience, position status or gender. Historically, due to their near-absent professional development opportunities, part-time faculty likely experience little if any mutuality with their employers.

Mutuality appears to be a quality essential to part-time faculty professional development. Applied to this population's professional development, mutuality could invite a dynamic, alive, far from "lifeless and petrified" (Freire, 1971) dialogue in which both part-time faculty member and employing institution place highest value on the exchange of ideas and their implications to each in their role and associated responsibilities. The established two-way communication informs both part-time faculty and the employing institution. Mutuality appears to offer tremendous potential for both part-time faculty and their employing institutions to flourish.

Authenticity

Authenticity is good example of the inseparable nature of these qualities. Cranton (2005) defines authenticity as "a multifaceted concept that involves being genuine, showing consistency between values and actions, relating to others in such a way as to encourage their authenticity, and living a critical life", emphasizing that the quality "develops in relationships, through dialogue…" (p. 72). Although one's honest self-appraisal is an integral part of developing authenticity, the assessment of a person's degree of authenticity is measured by another. Critical to this assessment, however, is the willingness to put aside any assumptions about what one might assume their developed level of multicontexuality *should* be (based on age, life experience, or teaching

experience). Accurate assessment can occur only when we instead ask part-timers to tell us about their world view/perspective, inviting through their personal narrative a more authentic picture of who they are. In doing so, we contribute through use of the growing social constructivist lens to what informs a professional relationship with the greatest potential for flourishing.

Cranton's definition of authenticity suggests that the development of an authentic relationship requires trust. On the other hand, Freire (1971) argues "To be authentic, the educator is bold, dares to take risks, and recognizes that he or she will not always win over the people" (p. 73). Based on the wide-ranging needs among the part-time population, it follows that the degree of trust part-time faculty require in order to be authentic will vary greatly. Yet also important to consider is that sometimes a person feels there is risk involved with asserting his authenticity. Cohen (1995), Sorcinelli (1995), and Zachary (2000) suggest that mentees may forfeit degrees of authenticity if they fear they might be judged or ridiculed for their thoughts, ideas, or responses. In the context of the part-timers in higher education, many remain silent about their professional development needs for fear that if they ask questions, describe frustrations, or voice uncertainties they may hurt their chances for future teaching contracts with that institution. This fear of appearing needy is at the heart of what some part-time faculty believe makes them more vulnerable to possible termination. As serious is how this then encourages greater inauthenticity with themselves.

Clearly this has powerful implications for how part-time faculty professional development that incorporates the goal of authenticity on both the part-timers' and the institutions' part could foster flourishing. When part-time faculty trust they will not be

judged or ridiculed and consequently, *feel no need to conceal* their needs, fears, inadequacies or anxieties, they are freed up to focus more fully on their development as effective educators. They would potentially accomplish more, and more quickly, and flourish in their learning. As a relational quality, efforts toward authenticity by both people in that relationship will facilitate greater levels of authenticity and subsequently, trust. This trust, in turn, reinforces the value of that authenticity, supporting its central role in flourishing relationships.

The Willingness to 'Not Know'

A fifth quality in the working model is the willingness to 'not know' (Cohen, 1999, Wheatley, 2004). There is an inextricable connection between trusting, taking risks, and a willingness to not know. As Cohen points out, "so often, children and adults alike have such a need to know that they pretend that they understand something before they do. This can quickly become an impediment to learning and discovery..." (p. 17). When mentees feel they should know more about a subject they may act as if they know more than they do instead of asking questions in order to save face. From a learner's perspective, a student may feel tremendous disappointment when hearing her teacher say 'I don't know', and yet as a result she now has a chance to flourish by not holding herself to the ideal of eventually knowing everything.

When part-timers determine that a willingness to not know will best support their professional development, verbalizing this not knowing encourages genuine identification of feelings, perceptions, needs, and room for approaching how to meet those needs. An employing institution willing to not know and verbalize this models the view that regardless of experience there is always more to learn. It tells the part-timer

that the learning institution sees itself as a learner as well. The value of both people's willingness in the relationship to say "I don't know" comes in its support of greater authenticity. It paves the way for greater flourishing.

Renewed Intentionality

The last quality identified in this model is renewed intentionality. Referring to one's intentionality as 'renewed' is important for two reasons. First, it allows for recognition of what both teacher and employing institution have previously approached in an intentional way. This quality is paramount in the relational context in the fact that it must be *renewed* in order for the relationship to continue developing in a relational, mutual way. When both parties maintain a conscious practice characterized by the qualities discussed above, renewing one's intentionality allows for what both have learned through the relationship to be integrated. Renewed intentionality, illustrated by the cycle of experience – *meaning-making – integration of meaning-making – renewed intentionality – experience,* reframes, changes, or transforms how one, the other, or both have been operating in their respective roles.

Renewed intentionality further assumes that educators make the commitment to review their teaching practices for assumptions and biases. In order to renew or for some, significantly strengthen their intentionality, educators need to take into account developing pedagogy and practice. A timely example is the rising need for faculty to identify current sociocultural realities and examine their attitudes and biases in order to reshape curriculum to make it most inclusive. It means actively and routinely assessing one's strengths and weaknesses, and then strategizing how to address what needs attention both in one's actual practice and in one's conceptualizing. Renewed

intentionality encourages teaching or guiding with a more informed design for best practices. It invites tremendous potential for flourishing.

Focused on two people or parties, the working model presented above holds promise for more than one application to part-time faculty professional development. The previous literature review identified relational theory applications in contexts including one-to-one relationships, relationships between one and many people, and relationships among a number of people participating in a group. As the teaching-turned-learning organization takes hold as a model in higher education, so does the concept of learning communities. Based on the rapid growth of this learning format, the discussion now turns to a review of models, shared characteristics and benefits, and analysis of the potential benefits relational practices have when applied to this learning format.

The Learning Community Incorporating Relational Tenets as a Form of Professional Development for Part-Time Faculty

The following discussion reviews learning community models in order to present their viability as a professional development application that would foster part-time faculty flourishing. Common characteristics, what learning communities provide participants, and how participants benefit is explored. It follows that a deeper understanding of how faculty benefit from their participation in these communities will expand the discussion of what relational qualities enhance potential for part-time faculty flourishing.

Current Definitions and Models

Learning communities today take a number of forms, and can be found in a number of fields. Based on their Communities of Practice model Wenger, McDermott

and Snyder (2002) provide a general definition they developed from a business management perspective: communities of practice are "...groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (p. 4). The authors contend that we are in learning communities daily; we simply don't think of groups we engage in as learning communities. People "don't necessarily work together every day, but they meet because they find value in their interactions...typically shar[ing] information, insight and advice" (p. 7).

Although grounded in a business perspective, these same tenets are increasingly identified as support for the establishment of learning communities in every field of education. In the adult education context, for example, Stein and Imel (2002) summarize learning in community as

> ...individuals coming together to exercise control and influence over the direction, content, and purposes of their learning", noting that "salons and taverns have now been replaced by study circles, chat rooms, coffeehouses, and community centers...The desire to share ideas, understand daily events, and engage in civic or communal action remains... (p. 1).

As a form of professional development for elementary school teachers, Schmoker (2004) describes a learning community where teachers meet on a regular basis, collaborating and "systematically identifying, cultivating, refining, and honoring the vast untapped fund of collective expertise already in our midst" (p. 88). According to Schmoker, "A true learning community identifies, honors, and provides opportunities for any and every successful teacher to share his or her methods and successes with colleagues" (p. 88).

From the focus in these reviews any degree of relational awareness, critical reflection, mutuality, authenticity, the willingness to not know, and renewed intentionality cannot be assumed or measured. However, Schmoker's definition suggests that all participants see themselves as learners, all are invited to narrate.

Although the phrase *faculty learning communities* is commonly used in reference to most faculty learning groups, it is important to note here that it is the official phrase – and stated as "FLCs"[14] – used when referring to the model created by Milton Cox at Miami University in 1978. Cox first established a learning community for junior faculty through a grant from the Lilly Endowment (Cox, 2001). As the first to establish faculty learning communities as a vehicle for exploring both teaching content and pedagogy, Cox's model has been adapted in many institutions since that time. Cox (2001) states that these communities engage "interaction with a student associate and a faculty partner…reading the new literature of the scholarship of teaching…and development of and work on a teaching project" (p. 80). FLCs can be either topic- or cohort-based. This faculty group meets at a designated time and place to discuss topics with a trained facilitator.

The highly-structured format and high expectations participants must meet reflects the central goals of the SoTL movement. Through participation, according to Cox (2003),

> …a member of an FLC on any topic will not only learn about that, but…will design and implement it as a focus course, with many opportunities to reflect with other

[14] From this point forward, "FLC" will be used only when referring to Cox's faculty learning community model.

> faculty learning community participants on its effectiveness and the assessment of resulting student learning and feedback (p. 18).

Additional activities include biweekly seminars on teaching and learning, national conferences and retreats, and minor compensation and/or rewards (pp. 81-83). The guiding premise of a cohort-based FLC is to "address the teaching, learning, and developmental needs of a…group of faculty or staff that has been…affected by the isolation, fragmentation, stress, neglect, or chilly climate in the academy", according to Cox (2004, p. 8). First-year or junior faculty, mid-career faculty, department chairs, deans, and graduate students who are preparing to be future faculty and part-time faculty are examples. Both types of faculty learning communities are created with the goal to make available membership and opportunities for learning across all faculty ranks.

Although they do not appear to result in a level of recognition equal to that of Cox's FLCs,[15] other models varying in structure and format provide participants benefits. One example of a study group comes from research done by Wildman, Hable, Preston & Magliaro (2000) at Virginia Tech, a research institution serving approximately 1600 faculty through its Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. These faculty developers ran a pilot study investigating the relationship between experience and reflection, narratives of practice, and collaborative learning. Participants were required to choose their own topic and group name, develop guidelines for planning and the promotion of informational sessions (a "kick-off" meeting), participate in biweekly meetings, attended a celebration at the end of the study, and provided feedback about the

[15] FLCs are increasingly recognized as a national model and supported by higher education foundations including Carnegie and Sloan.

experience in an evaluation. Group membership was interdisciplinary, and size ranged from five to eight members.

A second example practiced on numerous campuses is the teaching circle. Shulman (1993) designed this particular model based on the observation that "colleges and universities have always taken justifiable pride in their commitment to inquiry and criticism in all fields...Now we must turn this tough scrutiny on our own practices, traditions and culture (p. 3). Nazareth College employs teaching circles. On it's Center for Teaching Excellence website (http://www.naz.edu/.html (Retrieved February 28, 2005), one finds the following definition: "...a small working group of faculty that meets on a regular basis...to reflect on and exchange ideas about an issue or concern related to their work as teachers..." Further website information includes a description of their pilot project, Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, which is based on the premise that faculty development begins with the creation of faculty discussion groups (i.e. teaching circles) that are "rooted in the liberal arts tradition of a democratic process via collegial discourse." Ongoing groups currently listed include pedagogy and social justice using Palmer's (1998) Courage to Teach[16] pedagogy as context; interdisciplinary teaching and learning; and teaching and learning with the challenges and opportunities of technology.

Common Characteristics among Learning Community Formats

Common characteristics understood in terms of learning community structure are summarized in Table 3: *number of participants, voluntary vs. involuntary, meeting duration, type of leadership,* and *compensation and/or rewards provided.*

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[16] *The Courage to Teach* is the title of Palmer's book, but is frequently used to refer to philosophical tenets and reflective questions he and Lively (1999) created to help teachers explore their thinking and their actions in their teaching practices, as they relate to teacher formation and renewal.

Table 1

Characteristics of Current Learning Communities – A Sample

Type of Learning community	Cox's Faculty Learning Communities	Teaching Circles	Study Groups	Nazareth College's Faculty Discussion Groups
Number of members	8 to 12 recommended but can be 6 to 15	4-8	6-10	6-8
Type of membership	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary	Voluntary
Meeting Duration	One year with the option to renew	2-6 semesters	Varies	Minimum one semester, with the option to renew
Type of leadership	Facilitator trained at the National FLC Summer Institute or by the individual institution	Shared	Shared	Shared
Compensation And/or Rewards	Release time Professional expenses Recognition by provost, deans, department chairs, colleagues	Varies	Varies	Varies

It is significant that all models investigated for this study are voluntary. Faculty place a high degree of importance on the freedom to choose what kind of professional development they participate in (Cafarella and Zinn, 1999). The learning community's increasing popularity may in large part be driven by the voluntary element and their

leaderless option. The fact that different models propose 6 to 8 (or 10) seems to suggest that the number of participants needs to be small enough to ensure true engagement and participation by all. Further, although the actual number of meetings varies, the length of groups meeting seems to start with one semester. The support and/or the ability for the community to continue meeting may depend on a number of factors including the length of a grant or budget allotments. This is sound reasoning. The initial dialogue and information sharing might fill the initial meetings. But the group's development can only happen over some period of time and it is this development that invites a growing sense of collegiality and affiliation which, in turn, encourages more dialogue. It would follow that more time with the same people in a familiar format where all are narrators, the more critical reflection, authenticity, willingness to not know, and renewed intentionality might result as well.

Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) suggest three components which are characteristics as well as identifiable aspects that a learning community provides. These include *domain, community,* and *practices.* A community's domain "defines the group's place in the world" (p. 32); it is the group's focus, the reason for its existence. One cannot assume what type part-time faculty would prefer based on its being such a diverse population. Regardless, the learning community's domain would determine a potential member's decision to join.

A second component - the community itself - provides a setting outside of one's daily work routine to engage with colleagues. For part-time instructors, this opportunity provides a break from self-directed learning pursuits to those and/or other learning pursuits within a group context. As it meets over time, the community of practice will

"establish this common baseline [of knowledge] and standardize what is well understood" (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p. 12). The community is a forum outside of one's own thinking in which to listen and to reflect; to give voice to one's ideas and perspectives, and be heard. As evidenced by the number of full-time faculty choosing to participate in some type of learning community for the community, affiliation and membership it offers, there is every reason to suspect that many part-time faculty want and need opportunities to participate in this form of professional development as well.

The specific practice(s) the learning community employs during meetings constitutes the third of the three components. "Practice is a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that...members share... [that once having met] for a while, members expect all to have learned the basic knowledge of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p. 17). Practices vary depending on the type of community. Cox's FLC participants culminate their learning in a seminar presentation they deliver to their cohort. They typically present their research at a national conference as well. To ensure best practices in the facilitation and thus, the development of the learning community, Cox and his colleagues have designed a facilitator training curriculum (http://www.units.muohio.edu/flc/ (Retrieved January 3, 2005). Those choosing to becoming facilitators go through a specific training that incorporates curriculum aimed at developing their ability to foster a set of qualities necessary for a spirit of community, which include: *safety and trust, openness, respect, responsiveness, collaboration, relevance, challenge, enjoyment, esprit de corps,* and *empowerment* (Cox, 2004, p. 19).

Assessing other communities' practices would shed light on whether or not these qualities are essential to any learning community's success; however, reviews of other models' practices are vague. The part-timer's ability to participate in Cox's FLCs might prove challenging based on the typical lack of time and easy access. Although a group of faculty might consider themselves a kind of learning community even when meeting for only one day, returning to that same faculty group at least once invites the potential for more connection, greater collegiality and stronger affiliation and potentially, intentional sharing among group members that might not otherwise occur. The research cited above suggests that although specific practices may differ to some degree between models, all learning communities employ a set of practices, which may matter more to some faculty than to others. Any discussion of necessary qualities shared across models is incomplete without identification of specific practices used in other models, and warrants further investigation.

Ways Participants Benefit

Expanding their discussion to ways participants benefit from their participation in a community of practice, Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) identify four benefits: a *way of knowing, both tacit and explicit knowledge is shared, knowing is individual where knowledge is not,* and *knowledge is dynamic*. A way of knowing comes as a result of time in the community:

> The knowledge of experts is an accumulation of experience – a kind of residue of their actions, thinking, and conversations – that remains a dynamic part of their ongoing experience…communities of practice serve as a living repository for that knowledge (p. 35).

Through their membership, participants have access to, and are an integral part of, this living repository. Once established, members draw from this baseline each time they meet. This component illuminates the fact that the collective experience and knowledge present in any faculty community not only enriches its foundation, but contributes in the cultivation of continuous learning in that group. Just as with full-time faculty, it is not hard to imagine how developing a way of knowing through a learning community would significantly enhance the professional development of many part-time faculty.

A second benefit is evidenced in the fact that both tacit and explicit knowledge is shared. Only through interaction with others in a variety of forms can both tacit and explicit learning occur. Examples in a learning community include storytelling, mentoring, case conferencing, and coaching. How often have we listened as a colleague shares a story about a student and suddenly we make a connection between what that person is saying and a past experience of our own, leading us to a deeper understanding? We use phrases like 'it suddenly dawned on me' and 'so *that's* what I've been trying to put into words…' to describe these experiences. Any full-time faculty have a reservoir of stories about particular 'ah-has' that occurred within the span of a five-minute-long conversation in the hallway with a colleague. The isolation many part-time faculty typically teach in not only precludes accessibility to the degree of these five-minute chats; it leaves them vulnerable to developing blind spots in their understanding and practice. It follows that this benefit may be one of the most desirable qualities the part-timer sees in a learning community.

A third factor communities of practice provide for is balance in one's learning process. Aptly put by Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002), "though our experience

of knowing is individual, knowledge is not" (p. 10). Within the larger community, knowledge has developed over many centuries. Within academic institutions, individual faculty have pieces of knowledge and a variety of experiences. Yet the vacuum that teachers often operate in prevents opportunities for significant social learning. Self-directed learning pursuits are potentially enhanced by learning in community, and vice versa. This illuminates the serious imbalance the part-timer contends.

Lastly, knowledge is dynamic. Knowledge changes. The increase in teaching options resulting from the dramatic increase in technical knowledge is one example. Basic information management and word processing will never change. However, software programs that provide 'new and better' ways to do these basic things are continually produced, and at increasingly faster rates. Research databases are slowly but surely putting university libraries out of business, and teaching programs like Blackboard and WebCT give faculty and students a number of ways to engage in both content and process of any given course. A second example is the field of adult learning. Only by starting with both a historical review and an analysis of those forces influencing current pedagogical shifts can learning community participants begin a discussion about higher education pedagogy. Any faculty member who does not begin their pursuit of knowledge by first establishing some contextual parameters could run the risk of haphazardly moving back and forth between establishing the baseline and only partially-informed meaning-making. Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) believe that if a community of practice has successfully established that baseline of knowledge, "people can focus their creative energies on the more advanced issues" (p. 12). As a result, the community has significantly more potential to both discuss developing knowledge and create new

knowledge from that baseline. Once again, significantly unfortunate for the part-time faculty population is the fact that unless these instructors *actively* self-direct their professional development, they cannot keep up with these changes.

It is critical to note at this juncture that any identification of benefits across models is a far from straightforward process. How faculty members benefit can only begin with an analysis of individual faculty members' reports. With this in mind, specific examples that point to *decreased isolation* as a benefit include the comments of a participant of Nazareth College's Collaborative for Teaching and Learning says this simply: "...[the circle allows] us the pleasure of talking with others about the work we love". In their study, Wildman et al. (2000) found that participants most frequently identified "the desire to lessen isolation" as what motivated them to join. New and newer[17] faculty reported using the study groups as a way to become part of the university academic community, while tenured faculty reported their desire for renewal and the goal of investigating newer developments in teaching and learning. In their discussion of their results, Wildman et. al. conclude that faculty developers too often focus on "how to make teaching easier, less complex... [and that] such development practices can help, but they can also deny... the occasion to delve into the personal meanings that are concealed in the stories of faculty teaching practice" (p. 248). Through sharing these personal stories, teachers develop a more informed and realistic lens through which to understand their membership within the larger teaching community. This practice potentially becomes a critical aspect of learning for both the teller and the listener. Statements noted previously about full-time faculty's need for connection echo how significantly this benefit is felt.

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[17] "Newer" in the literature typically refers to those faculty who have taught up to but no more than 3 years in academia.

A second benefit that can accompany participation in a learning community is an *increased openness to both self and others.* There is no question that sharing their questions and concerns invites varying degrees of vulnerability and risk-taking. Through listening to others' stories of what did and did not "work", making change becomes a risk worth taking. From her experience with her Harvard colleagues, Sarkasian (1993) recalls that over time, "individuals dare to comment more personally on teaching, learning, and life" (p. 9). From others' openness within the community, Sarkasian felt greater openness in expressing herself. Wildman et al.'s (2000) study bears out similar results. As a result of participating in a learning community, participants reported an increased comfort level in being able to share their opinions and ideas (p. 257). These researchers state "this recognition and validation of the importance of their own experiences provided [participants]... with the confidence to share their concerns, interests, and successes within the group and, more importantly, to try new ideas in their classrooms" (p. 258). One's vulnerability potentially lessens when increasing numbers of community members take this risk. It encourages confidenee, authenticity, and potentially a willingness to not know.

This also strongly suggests that the community dynamic encourages partieipants to move away from self-critique and toward self-reflection. For example, Sarkasian (1993) believes that the open mindedness she experienced in her case study seminar led her to examine her own practices more objectively. A benefit to all in the community appears to come each participant putting into words his/her specific experiences. Concommit to the benefit of voicing these experiences is the sense it engenders that 'we

are all in this together.' Certainly any part-timers who participate might benefit tremendously from this as well.

In their descriptions, participants sometimes couple this concept of openness to self and others with *collaboration.* Sarkasian (1993) identified cooperative problem-solving as a means through which she could increasingly collaborate outside of the group with other colleagues. A second example comes from one teaching circle participant of Nazareth College's Collaborative for Teaching and Learning: "The discussions affirm the value of collaboration."

Openness toward self and others leads to *critical reflection of one's and others' practices* as a benefit to faculty participants. It is reasonable to assume that many educators routinely reflect on their pedagogical premises and practices, carving out the time necessary to stay current in discipline-based developments, make syllabi revisions, conduct research, and periodically articulate/share new ideas in an article or conference presentation. Each of these activities requires some degree of critical reflection. When and how the part-timer critically reflects in comparison to the full-timer is a question that requires a study unto itself. Regardless of faculty status and type of critical reflection faculty engage in, stepping back to reflect on one's practice is a central benefit of participating.

Lastly, the benefit of *greater self awareness* to learning community participants is clear. Sarkasian (1993) provides a good example of this as she describes having had the opportunity to reframe her self-concept as an instructor. She observes that "the case discussion seminar greatly changes [instructors'] approach to teaching, that they see themselves less as conveyors of knowledge and more as facilitators of learning"

(Sarkasian, 1993, p. 43). By seeing herself as a facilitator of learning, she was then able to begin seeing herself as others saw her. She concludes that "the real outcome is not cracking the case, but learning more about one's own assumptions and the insights of one's colleagues" (p. 43). This learning may be the most powerful aspect of this type of professional development. Cranton (1996) emphasizes the fact that

> When we understand what we believe and its roots (whether those be in our childhood, our past experiences, our culture, our language, or the media), then we become free to choose whether or not we want to maintain that belief. Without knowing the source of our assumptions, it is difficult to feel free to question them (p. 85).

This resembles the concept of levels of competence proposed by unconscious incompetence, conscience incompetence, unconscious competence, and conscious competence. For some, this new-found self-awareness is significant. It may well illustrate the perspective transformation Mezirow (1991) defines. For others, it is more of a clarification or a reframing. In other words, it offers potential for informational *and* transformational learning (Kegan, 2000). Recognizing one's assumptions in the midst of others recognizing their assumptions may come as a huge relief. The benefit of increased self-awareness seems invaluable to any instructor regardless of status. Greater self-awareness often leads to further critical reflection. In Shomoker's (2004) view "...the moment teachers begin to closely examine their lessons and the results of those lessons, instruction improves and competence increases" (p. 85). He argues that the learning community is far superior to any workshop or staff development teachers can engage in toward the development of self-awareness. This supports the idea that critical reflecting

with others is leads participants to greater openness to themselves and others, increases their self-awareness, and encourages the possibility of greater collaboration in their work.

It is easy to see how feeling/being less isolated through participation in a learning community could prove significant in a number of ways toward faculty's ability to take risks in their teaching. But what is reported thus far in the literature gives rise to qualitative questions. For example, what might more specifically explain the differences in individual faculty members' benefits from participating in a learning community? When one participant reports that, from her learning community experience, "These circles respect and enable us to grow as autonomous, thoughtful professionals", how do we ferret out exactly what that individual is taking from the experience in comparison to another's response? Why does the learning community become the desperately needed link to feeling affiliation and collegiality for some, whereas for others it is a less needed - though perhaps nonetheless appreciated - forum? These types of question can only be investigated in the larger context of personality, type of faculty, number of years teaching, and other sociocultural factors.

There is no question that the concept of faculty learning communities is blossoming. Cox (2001) points out that they provide "more holistic, connected and flexible approaches to faculty development" (p. 8) than previous models. They appear to offer greater potential for professional development. For example, even though the seasoned instructor is exposed to the same learning community format as the new instructor, each respond and benefit in a way meaningful to them. The same learning community that offers new faculty a first opportunity to discuss philosophical tenets may potentially meet the seasoned instructor's need for renewal. The seasoned instructor

might end up experiencing renewal through their perceived role of coach or mentor to the newer faculty. They might find the community rekindles their love of teaching and learning, and help them identify new areas for research. Whether it is renewal, the need for people and interpersonal relationships, the desire to stay current or simply reignite their passion for their craft, seasoned faculty have as much to gain as new faculty from participating in a learning community.

Further notable about learning communities is they can provide qualitatively different forms of professional development at varying points in an individual's professional career as well. The format itself encourages this to happen. By the nature of its domain and set of practices, the success of a learning community comes as a result of what Wender, McDermott and Snyder maintain are central characteristics: it provides a shared way of knowing; tacit as well as explicit knowledge is shared; knowledge is dynamic; and learning is individual as well as social. Finally, as learning communities appear to be successful whether they are leaderless or run by a facilitator, they do not *require* trained facilitators.

Learning communities have reached level of activity that encourages greater emphasis on the interface between faculty self-awareness and critical reflection of previous teaching experiences, and how this interface informs faculty's perspective on how people learn. The focus has shifted to a much greater emphasis on one's philosophy of teaching and pedagogical practices, and the development of metacognition: identifying and understanding how one best learns (Hubball, Clarke & Beach, 2004).

In addition to the senior, mid-career, and tenured faculty, increasing numbers of universities are developing initiatives including learning communities that address the

professional development needs of graduate assistants (Armstrong, Felten, Johnston & Pingree, 2005) and those preparing to be future faculty. Similarly, new full-time faculty are now recognized and supported in more ways as they struggle to develop collegiality, affiliation, and a professional identity (Bach, Barnett, Fuentes, & Frey, 2005; Bode, 1999). Krebar's (2004) study at Metropolitan State College at Denver, Colorado where she established a learning community for first-year full-time faculty bears this out.

How Part-Time Faculty Participation in Learning Communities Encourages Flourishing

Although tremendously limited, the research examining learning community applications to the part-time faculty population are important to review. Blackwell, Channel and Williams (2001) approached their research having identified the central hurdle: "how to provide support to this classically 'marginal' workforce while at the same time establishing quality assurance mechanisms that are both effective and convincing to external inspectors" (p. 4). Using the teaching circle (TC) format, they invited part-time faculty from four schools in the United Kingdom to participate. A research team member met with each point person to discuss the details of establishing a teaching circle and conducted the first meeting at each of the four sites, in which they

> focused on potential benefits of TCs and students' expectations of part timers in order to provide forward momentum by generating a list of potential topics for future discussion. In addition, each TC elected a convener for future meetings. Each TC was revisited once by a researcher, this time as an observer. TCs then worked independently until the end of the academic year, when an evaluation was instigated. (p. 42).

This study informed Blackwell, Channel and Williams' (2001) proposal of what essential actions are essential to the success of a teaching circle designed for part-time faculty. The institution must tailor the role to part-timers' context, promote ownership, clarify how the teaching circle fits in with other development possibilities, provide appropriate level of administration help, and start before the semester starts. Participants reported primarily positive experiences as a result of their participation in the teaching circle community.

The above discussion leaves no doubt that learning communities provide participants a wide range of potential benefits. Given that a growing number of advocates are demanding that the higher education community face up to the part-timer's plight, coupled with the increasing part-time faculty population, it is stunning to find such limited research applying the learning community concept to the part-timer. There is no reason to think that the part-time instructor would not benefit in the same ways that past and current (full-time) participants report. For example, through participating the part-timer would undoubtedly feel less isolation. Further, critically reflecting with others on one's teaching would facilitate awareness of one's pedagogy and practices. Just as full-time faculty report, the learning community might not be as novel an experience as much as a supportive, affirming, and informational one. One reason for this might be the degree to which the part-time instructor already engages in self-directed learning and conversation with other colleagues. Yet others might have a far more transformational learning experience. In terms of becoming more open to self and others, it is easy to see how the learning community experience would encourage this in part-time faculty as well.

Given the above, it is not hard to imagine how a learning community could become a professional 'lifeline' for many part-timers because the logistical complexity of their lives may impede a large number of part-time faculty's participation in an ongoing face-to-face learning community. Yet Blackwell, Channel and Williams' study (2001) engaging part-time faculty in the teaching circle model of learning community offers hope. Other part-time faculty might be more available to participate if the learning community followed a hybrid model of both face-to-face and on-line community practices. Based on the fact that the part-time population will only grow, academic institutions will be best positioned to maintain their integrity and educational excellence only through developing programs that will facilitate, enhance, and above all, ensure sound professional development to its *part-time faculty*.

Summary

This section explored the nature of learning communities in order to discuss the implications for their application to professional development for part-time faculty. An investigation of current learning community models identified common characteristics, components, and benefits they provide participants.

A learning community would provide the part-time instructor with opportunities to share one's teaching ideas, strategies, or pedagogical or philosophical questions with other instructors and offer them a way to balance their primarily self-directed efforts. It is my contention that the part-time instructor would benefit through participating in a learning community as a cost-effective and gravely needed form of professional development, an imperative long overdue.

Further, just as there is a variety of learning community models currently being employed, different learning community models need to be researched in order to encourage the highest level of participation possible for the part-time instructor population. The tremendous development in technology provides hope in this arena. There are currently numerous faculty ListServes and internet capabilities that appear easily adaptable in creating more on-line professional development communities. Models that employ a combination of face-to-face and on-line participation in a learning community may prove the most effective in reaching a range of needs and preferences that include learning style, degree of need for community, or disenchantment with so much computerization as it is. These models would account for the widest range in learning style and life style complexity of the part-timer. Northern Essex Community College's faculty website has apparently been extremely successful in this regard (Kramer, personal communication, May 2004). It includes that includes a number of faculty programs, a chat room, and a list serve. Initiatives that offer this format as a learning community option need to be designed and implemented on a large scale in order to ascertain their applicability and degree of effectiveness.

Assessment of part-time faculty's needs reveals a near-absence of applications to the part-time faculty population. Including them in the growing body of research on this potentially transformative process recognizes and actively responds to the fact that part-time faculty are, and will continue to be, a growing part of the larger faculty community. It is essential to get part-timers on the map of learning community activity.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodological applications used in this study. It begins with a description of the changes in my perception (Mezirow, 1991) as I proceeded through the research process. I then discuss the rationale for incorporating a qualitative design, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry. A review of Appreciative Inquiry further establishes the research context in both its conceptual lens and how it informs the framework for designing interview questions. Data collection and analysis process follow. The chapter concludes with brief vignettes from participants' narratives as a way to introduce the reader to them prior to analysis of participant interviews in Chapter 4.

Situating Myself as Researcher

Looking back I see a process of my own development during the course of doctoral study which culminates in this project. I began my research of the part-timer in earnest my second year having no idea how grievous the part-time instructor's experience was. The more I learned, the angrier I became, identifying with the part-timer, easily defensive and feeling misunderstood in conversations with other graduate students, including during a doctoral writing seminar. The less 'objective' I was, the more discouraged I became. I recall feeling simply unable to craft any reasonable conclusion for a course paper in which I had surveyed the issues and the few existing studies advocating greater action in support of part-timers' plight. How could I propose any

recommendations for how higher education and part-time faculty themselves might move forward? My commitment to conduct research that would contribute in some way to changing the system of higher education was overshadowed by my looming sense of hopelessness for this appalling set of circumstances.

My researcher self began surfacing as I continued my study. I learned that in the midst of this plight there were many part-timers who were not only content with their circumstances, but relieved not to be more connected to their employers through meetings and the like. At some point, I understood: In order to be a true researcher, I must shift my focus and maintain an open mind. This translated to my accepting that my adjunct experiences were one of many possibilities. I was able to continue my research with a more genuine interest in other adjunct stories, not for how similar or different they were to my own, but for what these stories meant for the narrators themselves.

Research Methodology

Qualitative Design

This study employed a qualitative design. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) provide a generic definition of qualitative work: "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world…that makes the world visible…" (p. 7). With the aim of broadening what existing research tells us about the part-timer's experience, I wanted to understand the content and process of experiences identified by part-timers themselves as positive professional development. I also wanted to investigate how participants made meaning of those positive experiences – and how they integrated these meanings – into their subsequent practice as educators. Thus, a central goal in this study was to make the part-timer visible, "capturing the individual point of view" and "securing rich descriptions" (Denzin

and Lincoln, p. 10). Finally, I wanted to obtain participants' perspectives of what they envision in the not-so-distant future, where higher education might provide positive professional development experiences that enable part-time faculty to flourish. I anticipated from years as therapist, counselor and educator that listening to people's stories framed around these areas would give me the richest data. I wanted to use a methodology that "allows the theory to emerge from the data... [thus is]...likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action," as articulated by Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 12). As pioneers in grounded theory, these theorists emphasize that through this approach I would be "creating new and theoretically expressed understandings" (p. 8) about the part-time instructor's experience, perspective and vision.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest that any qualitative research endeavor incorporates an acceptance of postmodern sensibilities. Creswell (1998) underscores this central point:

> ...knowledge claims must be set within the conditions of the world today and in the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations. ..these are negative conditions, and they show themselves in the presence of hierarchies, power and control by individuals in these hierarchies, and the multiple meanings of language...[and in]...discourses, the importance of marginalized people and groups...the presence of meta-narratives or universals that hold true regardless of social conditions (p. 79).

Although this study was not designed to ferret out class, race, and gender variables, Creswell's words are salient here in that the part-time instructor population is a group

affiliation with a distinct meta-narrative, a potent example of the negative effects higher education's hierarchy has on this faculty group.

Finally, qualitative inquiry assumes social construction. This "…communication is the central process that creates, maintains, and transforms realities" (Cooperider, 2005, p. 51). A qualitative methodology best informs this study because it seeks to obtain participants' stories of their experiences and their evaluation of those experiences, in addition to their perception of what they think higher education administrators need to do to address this population's professional development needs. Their experiences and perceptions – how they have made meaning – are vital to a more general discussion of how we might better support the flourishing of part-time faculty.

Merriam (2002) points out that narrative - "first-person accounts of experiences" - typically have a beginning, middle and end. Bloom (2002), Chase (2002), and Reissman (1993), suggest that narratives contain a story line or, according to Elliott (2005), a plot (p. 6). Moen (2006) further observes that narrative and story are terms typically used interchangeably to refer to individuals' accounts of their experiences, which can include life history, oral history, autoethnography, biography and autobiography. He cautions the researcher to be clear in describing one's use of narrative because it is both "phenomenon and method…a frame of reference in a research process….a way of reflecting during the entire inquiry process, a research method, and a mode for representing the research study" (2006, p. 2).

Having listened to individuals' stories throughout my professional career, I believed inviting participants' narratives to be most appropriate for my study. I wanted to hear the part-timers' stories because I expected that they would offer the best

descriptions of their experience and that a semi-structured interview process would provide the most successful opportunity for this to take place. The small number of administrators and advocates now researching and designing ways to better meet part-timers' professional development needs are primarily using needs assessment surveys and post professional development evaluations (Holliday & Carter, 2007; Hutti, Rhodes, Allison & Lauterbach, 2007, and Lambert & Cox, 2007). Still, little narrative exists from part-time faculty themselves about their experiences beyond these primarily quantitative measures. I share Chase's (2002) view: "narration is a major way in which people make sense of experience, construct the self, and create and communicate meaning" (p. 79).

Lastly, I wanted to provide a venue in which participants could share their experience; where they could engage in conversation. Cottle's (2003) conceptualizations about the affirmation we provide participants through the act of hearing their stories speaks to this desire. I wanted, through the interview process, to offer validation and affirmation in light of the fact that it is something they seldom receive.

Inasmuch as narrative seeks the individual's subjective experience, however, Chase (2002) points out that "personal narratives, no matter how unique and individual, are inevitably social in character" (p. 80). Chase elaborates: "Narratives are…social in the sense of reflecting broad social, cultural, ideological, and historical conditions in which they get told and get heard…playing a role in specific communities as well as in a society at large" (p. 80). I believed that participants' stories would provide significant information through their explicit descriptions of positive professional development experiences and how participants made meaning of these experiences. I agree with Helle (1990) who states "Narrative ways of knowing function collectively to affirm the values

of multiplicity and connection" (p. 49). Hopefully this would lead to valuable discussion about how institutions might consider supporting best practices for part-time instructors' professional development.

On a number of occasions prior to my conceptualizing this design, colleagues suggested that I interview administrators, full-time faculty, and even some students for this study. From the beginning of my study of this population seven years ago, I have imagined I would use some type of qualitative methodology, interviewing exclusively part-timers themselves. I designed my study with this unwavering goal, based on a knowing that part-timers themselves are the best source for identifying what has worked for them and what they continue to need to do their best work.

Appreciative Inquiry

The framework I chose for situating the study is called Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Cooperrider, 2000). This methodological approach has blossomed over the last twenty years as an innovative and successful action research method in the organizational development field. Born out of a need for "a new model for change", Cooperider was interested in investigating what inspires or "gives life" to organizations. He suggests that the success of AI is its emphasis on strengths or 'what's working' in a system: "The problem with the deficit model is that it assumes we know what the ideal is" (p. 17). In Cooperrider's words, "...the study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best...suggests that human organizing and change, at its best, is a relational process of inquiry, grounded in affirmation and appreciation" (as quoted in Salopek, 2006, p. 1).

Together the following provide AI's foundation (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2004, p. 2):

- people individually and collectively have unique gifts, skills, and contributions to bring to life;
- organizations are human and social systems, sources of unlimited relational capacity, creativity and lived in language;
- the images we hold of the future are socially created and, once articulated, serve to guide individual and collective actions;
- through human communication (inquiry and dialogue) people can shift their attention and action away from problem analysis to lift up worthy ideals and productive possibilities for the future.

I chose this approach for two reasons. First, there is adequate research exploring and identifying circumstances deemed typical for those of part-time faculty status. In addition, I was intrigued by AI's theoretical and conceptual framework. There are numerous examples in the literature of successful organizational change using AI, including British Airways, GTE, British Petroleum ProCare, American Red Cross, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, SmithKline, Beckman Instruments, Imagine Chicago, the City of Berkeley, and John Deere. In a study with a group of clergy, Bartlett (2002, as cited in Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003) reports successful changes following his application of the AI model in his interviews with faculty members, students, and alumni from 18 Jewish and Christian seminaries. In another example, Barnes (2005) discusses positive changes in a Head Start program in Denver, Colorado, nine months after completing the AI process. He point out how previous models fall short: "Focusing on problems draws

attention to breakdown rather than the strengths of the system. It encourages a blame culture and creates an emphasis on looking good rather than being good" (p. 2).

Central to AI's methodology is Cooperrider's 4-D Model (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). These D's are *discovery*, or "appreciating what is"; *dream*, or "imagining what might be"; *design* or "determining what should be," and *destiny*, or "creating what will be" (p. 23). Those using this methodology use questions based on the four D's to conduct individual interviews, focus groups, and large group meetings to gather information from every individual who works in the system of study. This can range from a department within an organization, to the entire organization along with as many of its stakeholders as possible, often over an extended period of time. The AI process can take a number of forms including a seminar, summit, or a consortium, over a period of one to two days, a number of weeks, or months.

A number of points about the use of the AI model in this study must be noted. First, this study does not incorporate what could be called a *complete* application of the model. Instead it borrows the first and second D - discovery and dream - for framing interview questions[18]. Discovery, or appreciating what is, focuses on what is working. Based on this, I formulated my interview questions about how participants define professional development, and what they identified as positive professional development experiences. I wanted to explore their definition of professional development because so many part-time instructors not only self-direct their learning but readily define professional development as outside the parameters of formal training; i.e., a course or a one-day workshop. I wanted to know what it was about these positive professional

[18] The third and fourth D's - *design* and *destiny* - are intentionally excluded because they are not in line with the overall purpose and scope of this study.

development experiences that worked. One of Cooperrider's points I particularly appreciate is that organizations spend a lot of time reinventing the wheel, when this time would be significantly better spent focusing on what's already working and growing these processes.

The second D, dream, is the "what if", or imagining what might be. I wanted to explore participants' impressions of what they believe higher education must do to help them flourish. If higher education were successfully providing significantly positive professional development experiences for part-time instructors, what would they be doing? What would be happening? I chose 2015 as a year for them to imagine what might be, in this context. I confess I anticipated these to be obvious in content; I felt sure I would not be surprised by any of their responses. I was only partially right about this. Participants shared a number of ideas fully 'outside the box.'

Further, essential to the evaluation of the potential use of any methodology, I reviewed some general criticisms of AI. Grant and Humphries (2006) point to AI's focus on the positive as having a "pollyannaish" tone. Yet Cooperrider's (2000) response is a sound one: "We do not dismiss accounts of conflict, problems or stress. We simply do not use them for the basis of analysis or action. We listen when they arise, validate them as lived experience, and seek to reframe them" (p. 18). Regardless of the fact that I did not ask participants directly about their less-than-satisfactory professional development opportunities or experiences, they provided these experiences in their narratives. I crafted the interview questions to elicit participants' positive experiences, how they made meaning of those experiences, and what positive actions they would like to see higher education take toward supporting professional development for the part-time instructor.

But at no time during the interview did I discourage narrative, or elaboration of, their experiences that illuminate the part-timer's plight. Consequently, describing a positive experience was a way to call attention to what has not served them positively in their professional development. In essence, I began this research with the confidence that participants would readily include their experience with these typical circumstances, and they did.

Research Questions

I designed my interview questions based on AI methodology in addition to studies using the AI model (Michaels, 2005). As a basis for these questions, I held firm to AI's premise that "questions must be affirmative and focused on topics valuable to the people involved and directed at topics, concerns, and issues central to the success of the organization" (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2003, p. 4). For the purposes of this study I identified the 'organization' as higher education at large. The interview schedule consisted of those questions below.

Interview Schedule

1. DISCOVER

Professional development experiences

- *How do you define professional development?*
- *What kinds of professional development have you participated in?*

Positive professional development experiences

- *Consider professional development experiences you would identify as positive: Tell me about one that stands out to you.*
    - *Who was there? What was the context? How did it feel?*

- *What, specifically, stands out to you about it (the high point)?*
- *What was at the heart of this/these experience(s)?*
- *What made it matter to you?*

How this/these experience(s) informs one's teaching

- *What was the lasting benefit?*
- *What did you take from that experience that you applied to your subsequent teaching?*
  - *In what way did that experience influence your teaching pedagogy as you would currently describe it?*
  - *What unique skills and gifts to you bring to your students?*

2. DREAM

How higher education should be providing part-time faculty professional development

- *Imagine that the year is 2015. As a nation-wide community, higher education has developed and implemented what you perceive as significantly positive changes in how it provides professional development to part-time faculty. Describe what you see the higher education community doing.*
- *As you look back, what first steps did academic administrations take that contributed to these positive changes?*

The interview schedule guided but did not dictate the interview process. I found this process to be one aptly illustrated by Moen (2006): "creating a narrative is primarily a process that organizes human experiences into meaningful episodes" (p. 6). Participants shared additional aspects of their professional lives during the interviews including their teaching pedagogy and to varying degrees, career history.

Becoming Researcher

Huber, Clandinin and Huber (2006) suggest that "relationships among narrative inquirers and participants are at the heart of what they do" (p. 211). This points to the vital aspect of how relationship is established and cultivated during the interview process. The degree to which the relationship is perceived as 'good' by both interviewer and participant mirrors the degree to which an interview can be considered successful. It is "a deep experiential process that lives at the heart of the relationships researchers and participants negotiated" (p. 211).

Interviewing people has been a large part of my professional work. I love listening, the gathering of details, and learning more about a person's perspective. I looked forward to interviewing my participants for this study, assuming the interviews would be revealing, rich, and fun. So I was humbled to find myself challenged and feeling awkward at various points during the interviews. After considerable thought I attributed my response to two possibilities. First, I thought I might be trying to negotiate interviewing styles. Having trained as a therapist early in my professional career and more recently, a psychiatric clinician, I have interviewed people using a number of formats over the years. As a therapist, before managed care took over, time was something clients and I would take as much of as was necessary to work through issues they sought help for. It never dictated the process. Yet as a crisis clinician, because time is of the essence, I've had to develop a kind of compassionate detachment.

I considered as well the fact that this study is a good illustration of "backyard research" (Geetz, 1988). Some warn against conducting research that is too close to home for fear it will cloud the researcher's ability to 'hear' what her participants are

telling her'.' I considered this a number of times and assumed it was possible I would 'bump up against' my own experience as a part-time instructor in some way. I did feel an immediate kinship with most of the nine participants, but I was careful not to make assumptions about similarities or differences in our experiences. But the fact that I had a positive relationship with my employer, received ongoing support, felt valued and appreciated, and was provided a variety of professional development opportunities may have contributed to my discomfort. When I asked participants to describe a positive professional development experience, a number of them immediately followed up their description of that experience with how it compared to professional development experiences they have had while holding part-time status (discussed in Chapter 5). As I wrote about and discussed my interview experiences with colleagues, I grew more comfortable and remained watchful of possible effects from this shared membership.

A final point in this discussion is that two participants became visibly upset during the interview. Again, I empathized and could appreciate the degree to which they had struggled living this cobbled life. When I contacted participants for clarification and elaboration on a particular question, these two participants did not respond. My initial frustration from not having a complete set of data from all participants turned into concern that something during the interview led them to sever contact. Although contrary to what I would normally do in another situation, there was no question but that I must let go, despite my concerns.

The Study Participants

Obtaining participants involved a number of steps. I used purposive criterion sampling (Patton, 2005) in order to narrow my sample to those part-time faculty who had

taught part-time for a minimum of three years, and taught in at least two institutions. I used both the key informant technique and the snowball method, contacting administrators in a number of institutions who would be best positioned to refer me to possible participants based on my criteria. I contacted the co-director of a center for teaching excellence at a university I am affiliated with, in addition to colleagues who might have, or know of, a colleague (who was a part-time instructor) or was someone who might refer me to other administrators or part-time instructors.

Finding willing participants for my study was not as easy as I had anticipated. Although I obtained over forty names of people to contact, the majority were unable to meet due to time constraints. This is not surprising, based on typical part-time faculty's circumstances, particularly those who would identify as aspiring academics. Time is something these educators have little to spare. Further, because I began this research in the winter months which brought the occasional snowstorm, I was forced to cancel two arranged interviews.

I revised my population parameters to participants who were part-time with a primary emphasis on the aspiring academic at some point, but not to the exclusion of those who were freelancers, expert/professionals, and career enders. The final participant group became six aspiring academics, two freelancers, and one expert/ professional. Although intentional heterogeneity in aspects of participants' identity such as age, ethnicity, gender, education level and field of study were not included as part of this study's design, I attempted to obtain some diversity among these facets, as such a population "introduces additional variables that might need to be accounted for during the analysis of participants' responses" (Patton, 2005, p. 143). Seven of the nine participants

had obtained their Ph.D.; one is currently in a doctoral program; and one had applied to Ph.D. programs and was waiting to hear about her acceptance at the time of our interview. She has since been accepted and began her doctoral work during the completion of this study.

Of note, finally, is that although I initially planned to include the type of institution where each participant teaches, I exclude it in the final write-up of the study. The fact that four participants asked that their confidentiality be assured directed this decision. At the time of this writing, I feel certain that the type of school part-time instructors teach in has little to no bearing on ascertaining what might most effectively support them flourishing.

Data Collection

Once I obtained participants' contact information I sent them an e-mail outlining the study and included the Consent Form (Appendix A) and the Study Demographic Form (Appendix B) as attachments. The content of the Consent Form stresses confidentiality of any thoughts, feelings and opinions shared with this researcher, and requests permission to use any part of the transcript in the analyses omitting names. Once a participant expressed a willingness to participate, we communicated via e-mail in arranging our meeting place for the interview. For seven of the nine interviews I drove to the participants' place of work. I met two participants at their homes. Although interview methods often include more than one interview, such as Seidman's (1998) three-interview phenomenological model and Linde's (1993) life story narrative inquiry method, I chose to meet with participants once, allowing for an in-depth look at one aspect of these participants' experiences, with the plan to contact them by e-mail or

phone should there be more information I needed or they wanted to share with me following the interview. Each of the participants agreed to be contacted again.

Table 2

Participant Demographics, Adjunct Type, Years as Adjunct

GENDER	AGE	ETHNICITY	FIELD	PART-TIME TYPE	YEARS PART-TIME
F	27	Caucasian	M.A., Humanities *Doctoral student*	*Aspiring Academic*	*3*
F	37	African American	M.A., Psychology *Doctoral student*	*Aspiring Academic*	*12*
F	50	Caucasian	Ph.D., Education	*Aspiring Academic*	*22*
F	50	Caucasian	Ph.D., Sociology	*Aspiring Academic*	*17*
F	52	Caucasian	Ph.D., Multicultural Education	*Aspiring Academic*	*18*
M	34	Caucasian	Ph.D., Psychology/Counseling	*Professional/Expert*	*12*
M	42	Caucasian	Ph.D., Environmental Science	*Professional/Expert*	*15*
M	60	Caucasian	Ph.D., Humanities	*Aspiring Academic*	*21*
M	64	Caucasian	Ph.D., Psychology/Education	*Freelancer*	*20*

Data Analysis

Grounded Theory

I began the process of microanalysis, or coding, highlighting words and phrases that stood out as I read through each transcript. I then read the transcripts a second time, placing participants' phrases or words under one of four categories: definitions of professional development; positive professional development experiences; meaning made from those experiences; and if higher education were providing significantly positive professional development experiences for adjuncts, what would higher education be doing. Examples of codes included a word, like "enhancing" and "experiential," or phrases, like "learning with others." Miles (1994) identify codes as being either patterns of variables or patterns of processes (p. 246). I grouped the process codes such as "learning with others" and "engaged with colleagues." I then grouped the context codes, including "experiential."

Strauss and Corbin (1998) define the coding process as the "analytic processes through which data are fractured, conceptualized and integrated to form theory" (p. 3). Once I identified and categorized all words and phrases I saw as codes, I dimensionalized the codes. This part of the process consisted of my 'working and reworking' codes. I realized that putting each one on a post-it note might facilitate this process, so I transferred each one, grouped them within each of the categories and would then reflect on the fit of their placement. I made a small number of changes. I then transferred these results to a draft on the computer. Once again I reviewed the changes I'd made, finding more revisions to the existing 'groups.' I made one last set of changes when drafting my analysis section, primarily at the level of the dimensions.

The longer I read through the data, the more I was uncomfortable with what felt like compartmentalizing the participants' experiences at the expense of including the *essence* of who they are. Discussing the positive professional development experiences of these individuals in analysis drafts seemed increasingly fragmented. I believed I would not be fulfilling a vital goal of the study if I did not introduce them in a section prior to discussing what they shared during our interviews. On the other hand, this would be a delicate task given that many of them were particularly concerned about their anonymity. I decided to include a brief description of each and a clip of their narrative as a way I could position them so that readers could have a sense of them before reading my analysis of their responses.

Relational Qualities

Although I began this part of my analysis with a fresh set of transcripts, I ended up going back to the original transcripts, previously highlighted and coded. I read each transcript again in its entirety to see what could be identified as a relational quality, highlighting these sections in orange.

With one exception, participants reported no relationship between themselves and the institution(s) they teach for. As discussed earlier as part of the part-time instructor's plight, not only is this absence of face-to-face contact between academic institutions and their part-time instructor employee typical, but communications are generally delivered in a bi-directional process - from the institution to the instructor - as well. These relational omissions, although not required or needed by all part-time faculty, are noted in numerous studies as part of what contributes to the part-time instructor's feelings of

marginality, invisibility, second class citizenship, and for some, a eventual departure from the teaching profession.

Although signs of this specific relationship were absent, I read in numerous passages what characterized one or more relational qualities in two sections of participants' narratives: 1) in descriptions participants gave when reflecting on relationships they had in or as a result of their positive experiences, and 2) in descriptions participants gave in response to the question "What gifts, skills or talents to you bring to your teaching?" These findings are discussed in the section following the grounded theory analysis in Chapter 5.

Participant Narratives

The following descriptions and clips from participants' narratives are included to inform readers of each person's adjunct type and a sense of their worldview. I crafted each narrative clip using the participant's words[19]. It is my hope that the narrative provides 'a feel for their essence' as I experienced it during their interview.

CLAUDE: Freelancer

Claude exudes his love of teaching. He beams, laughs at himself a lot, and speaks passionately about his work. He has poured himself into the craft of teaching for over twenty years, starting to teach while working on his doctorate in Humanities. He gradually sought out other teaching sites; at one point was teaching in three institutions. He has remained at one school over 21 years, a site in which all instructors are part-time. In addition to teaching 2 courses per quarter there, he holds two other positions at that institution: Resource Faculty (in which he is a liaison for other faculty in his genre) and Task Force Member (charged with examining students' critical thinking processes).

[19] Additions to participants' narratives are indicated by brackets.

As adjuncts, we're out there on the cutting edge. I think this is true of all of us. We're kind of kindred sprits. We know how tough it is and we respect each other more than any other institution does. You know I see my colleagues coming in dragging their stuff, late at night, you know with no security. No job security whatsoever. It's just a temuous agreement; you never know. I get so much energy from my colleagues, from their enthusiasm, their spirit. That's really all that matters. At the end of the road, it's going to be who did you know and what kind of laughs did you have and did you give your best. It's been an honor, and it's made me a better person. If I look back twenty years I think I'm a better teacher. I'm more patient and more sure of what I'm doing.

BILL - Freelancer

Bill has a more understated presence yet is no less passionate. His focused presence is personable and caring. He has been an educator throughout his professional career, in a number of different settings with both children and adults. As an adult instructor he has taught part-time for over twenty years, the last fifteen in two settings. He facilitates experientially-based leadership and team-building trainings for three organizations. He co-founded a non-profit organization which provides access to people with disabilities.

I think the biggest thing we're losing in our country is a sense of community. Of what you do with what you learn. It's focused on self aggrandizement a lot and greed not much more than taking these gifts that you have given them these skills you developed and applying them to make a better world. I'm a firm believer of that whole notion that a fish doesn't know it's in water until you take it out of water. So we don't fully grasp our own culture until we're thrust into another one. So if had the influence I'd provide the

chance for people to have a significant third world experience...to actually live in a village for a few days, say, in Nicaragua or Kenya. It's an eye opener. I think it would hopefully start building up a sense of community, a greater sense of community in this country. I almost believe that now if we don't do that we have about five or ten more years and if we kept going the way the prevailing ethos is now, we'll be in more trouble. I think we already are. But the pendulum swings...

SHELLEY: Aspiring Academic

Shelley has been teaching part-time since 1989 for one higher education institution. Driven by her "voracious" appetite for learning in addition to feeling isolated, she returned to graduate school and completed her Ph.D. in May, 2006. She has a partner with whom she parents their transracial children. With all of her established contacts and stellar evaluations, she has not been able to find any teaching contracts for next semester.

What I want to do in the world right at the moment is teach [people]. So it's fulfilling this huge dream for me. At the same time I'm asking them to pay attention to who they are and what they're learning and what they're going to do with it. And so that's a really nice combination. I'm asking them hard questions, but I'm also doing the work myself so I think I model that kind of self-examination. I want also to have a passionate pedagogy. Liberate them...inspire them. And I think that that's true, what people feel and I'll rock their paradigms. One of the first evaluations really rocked my paradigm. '[So]...I'm going to rock your paradigm.' Let's rock paradigms but let's do it with love and compassion and this is really hard work, but... [we've got to] make changes, and be who we really are out there.

AZIZA: Aspiring Academic

After twelve years teaching full-time at a small college, Aziza and her program colleagues were "let go" due to financial constraints. This happened five years ago. Since then, having completed her doctorate around the same time, Aziza looks for a full-time teaching position while continuing to patch together courses from different colleges within a one-hour radius from her home. She has taught as many as five courses during one semester, between three institutions. Her eyes mist a number of times during the interview.

It's going to be very hard getting any positive comments from me (laughing). And I'm very frustrated...I think one of the hard things of going from being fully involved in one institution to being just a visitor in others is that in so many institutions I don't feel I serve the students half as well as I did when I was fully engaged in one institution. My job is to teach. So I go in and teach my course they don't get the overall attention they got from me [before]. You know, I can't listen to it, I can't support them...it's not my job. It feels very frustrating. And I can't even point them in the direction of research projects or further engagement. [It's] very fragmented. I've been asked several times, could you be the faculty sponsor for ...and they don't pay for that. I'm not going to. I just have to guard my time. Part-time faculty tend to do the full-time job. That's the high price. Since I lost my job I have really wanted to [go to more conferences] but I'm an adjunct and I find that's just about impossible.

You know, I don't see myself even trying to become tenured. Because its so much work, and I had to make so many sacrifices for my family and myself to even get this doctorate done. And so that means another 5-6 years of the same thing and it's like a

bone...and so you see its like my soul is suffering from that type of single-minded hope, and I don't think its good. It's not a rounded life...

ELEANOR: Expert/Specialist

Eleanor, like Bill, is very passionate in a matter-of-fact way. In her years as adjunct she has some quite difficult experiences. She has been an educator with a number of populations. She has taught as an adjunct over the last ten years, in addition to consulting for an adventure-based education center. Just over one year ago she got a position directing and developing a new branch of an existing academic program, and now consults and directs full-time. At fifty, she has much to give back.

When I look back on all my years of teaching I'm not sure that I ever had a single professional development experience...I mean, [not] one that was sponsored by the Institution I was teaching for. But to sum it up I would say the unfortunate part of my professional development has been mostly by the seat of my pants and my own determination to want to excel and progress in my career and in that I've done really well. I had to, kind of stumble through it, stagger through it.

I made the transition from ten or eleven years of teaching as an adjunct into a core faculty position, which the college didn't have tenure track positions. So that was a full time, non-tenure track position, so to a core faculty position meant that I was part of the team, part of the faculty. I got my picture on the web. And, I really screwed up and it's because I didn't know how to navigate the terrain and the difference was when I was a part timer, adjunct, all I needed to do to be successful was teach my course well. And the only way people knew whether or not I was doing a good job was the evaluations and the reputation I had among students. And as long as those things were great and I was

easy to work with, the college was happy. All these years of education and aspiration to be part of the community and then ... I wonder if any other profession requires so much time and money on people's part and then expects people to live with wages that aren't livable. If people didn't love what they did...

MICHAEL: Expert/Specialist

In addition to serving as full-time director of a department on his campus, Michael teaches at least one course per year. He has taught for over ten years in different university settings. He has come to count on income from that course, as so many adjuncts do, to support his young family.

Michael expresses significant disappointment in his current institution, based in large part on systemic changes he has experienced during his employment there. Specifically, he and all other part-time faculty have had a number of benefits ultimately 'taken away'.[20] He speaks below about specific examples that fuel this growing discouragement in his employer.

The frustrating thing is some adjuncts don't care, they older or retired, and the money is extra and it's whatever, as long as they get paid. And some adjuncts who've never taught before and they're excited, you know they have some graduates, people just graduated and that's two or three years later and that's their first teaching gig and they don't even want to get paid...That's how I felt when I first taught my...courses. It was all gravy. They could have paid me a year later and I was just as happy. But, you know the work horse people who are stepping in and they take the phone calls and around this time

[20] Approximately 4 months after our interview, Michael informed me he had obtained a job at a university in another part of the country.

next semester, 'can you teach ...?' And to feel like there's not that level of respect there...

It's hard especially if you're working full time and everything. And they're good students so you're looking at giving up working with them...this is the first year I am looking at giving up the deviants course. I've just taught it so many times I need a break from it. There are other professors who will take it over, but, it's hard. It would be great if someone could make my job a little lighter, help me out so I could do an even better job, but at the very least not start off my teaching year in September with telling me the money is different, you don't have any faculty development funds or, frustrating.

ROSS: Freelancer

Ross has a half-time research faculty position in one institution in which he primarily consults. He also teaches part-time for a residency-format undergraduate college. He describes his two ongoing positions as 'very academic research versus very applied.' He sometimes teaches in a summer institute at the school where he consults. More than once he said "I just juggle things as much as possible". Ross seems to thrive on this combination of work and valuing his role as a 'skilled advisor' with students, above all else.

...This dept...used to have a lot more adjunct faculty than [it does] now. In fact, they've made a conscious effort to actually weed them out. The Dept Chair's very up front about it. The focus here now is to get more full-time faculty...Students pay a lot of money and they want to be taught by full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty...I don't think there are many adjuncts in other departments either. This department was losing

internal political struggles with other departments...because of not having enough core faculty, which would give them more clout.

I'm still debating with myself about how much of [what I do] is teaching. [Here where I consult] they call me an 'advisor.' I also do informal advising in labs, or for graduates. It's more like being an advisor vs. teaching in the class... It's probably the single most important thing I've done...[In the residency program] I use my ability to find other resources for [students]...and give them the research skills, the writing skills, to actually make their case a little bit better...I figure that's fine...but if you're only looking with that lens, you're going to miss some other things. Also, it's not fair to send students out into the world without being able to realize that if they really want to believe this, they're going to have to deal with the rest of the world & figure out some ways to defend their beliefs...They should be able to elaborate on them so others will take them seriously...

JULIE: Aspiring Academic

Julie is an enthusiastic, articulate young woman with an energetic presence. She's been teaching for nearly three years and this past semester was hired for a contingent full-time position. She says she has grown a lot in how she works with her students, but looks forward to continuing her formal education in English and Writing.

I think it's stupid...I try to remove myself from the political ...it gets to be just too much, and distracting, you know? So I like to stay out of it. I hear stories of both sides, that there are pros and cons to being the adjunct, and that one of the big advantages is that you don't necessarily have to participate...I am in a position right now where I am not required to participate, but even so, I have to keep saying I'm not full time, I'm not

full time...I'm going to spend my time taking classes, and I pay for it myself...My supervisor is really great about it. She says, look, do what you need to do. I think its just, people who have nothing better to do...than see what other people are up to.

I don't know...I think [when they created] the position, I don't think they thought too much about it. It's a supposedly new position, and I think they are still negotiating [aspects of it]. It's interesting because...last year I started this position and they gave me a bunch of advisees. And so this summer I was hired again for the position. I [said] 'you know, technically, I shouldn't have advisees, this isn't right. And they [said], 'well, we're not going to make this a full-time position'. So I decided 'you can't have it both ways...I can't have these advisees. No'. That was a big decision...However, I have two advisees. I have one that just left me a cryptic note, that just says 'no, I won't have another advisor' and that's too bad for me, because, again, if I want to take time for classes and things, I can't...

MAYRA: Aspiring Academic

Mayra has been teaching part-time in the areas of multicultural counseling and family therapy since 1986. She references hooks (1997) periodically in her description of her teaching pedagogy and practice. Over the past decade Mayra has made significant contributions toward increasing recognition of domestic violence and related legislation in the state where she lives.

Conclusion

This study design incorporated a qualitative methodology consisting of one semi-structured interview approximately ninety minutes in length with nine participants. Interview questions and methodological design based on Appreciative Inquiry were

applied with the goal to explore what in the experiences participants deem positive made them so. Participants' narratives were analyzed using a grounded theory approach in order to analyze categories based on interview questions: Their experiences of professional development; their identification of positive professional development experiences; what they felt was at the heart of those positive experiences; what the lasting benefits were; how those positive experiences informed their subsequent teaching; and what they envisioned higher education doing if it was successfully providing positive professional development experiences to the part time population. Application of a working model of relational qualities to participants' narratives allowed for analysis of the presence of relational qualities. Analyses of these applications are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

This chapter presents analyses of participants' narratives through two lenses, as outlined in Chapter 4. First, using a grounded theory lens, themes are identified from participants' responses to a set of questions. Using an Appreciative Inquiry perspective, participants responded to the following questions:

1. *How do you define professional development?*
2. *Consider professional development experiences you would identify as positive; Tell me about one that stands out to you:*
    i. *Who was there? What was the context? How did it feel?*
    ii. *What stands out to you about it (the high point)?*
3. *What was at the heart of this experience?*
4. *What were the lasting benefits?*
5. *How did this positive professional development experience inform your subsequent teaching?*
6. *What gifts, skills and talents do you bring to your teaching?*
7. *Imagine that the year is 2015. As a nation-wide community, higher education has developed and implemented what you perceive as significantly positive changes in how it provides professional development to part-time faculty. Describe what you see the higher education community doing.*

Second, using a narrative inquiry lens, participants' accounts are analyzed in their entirety for relational qualities:

- Relational awareness
- Critical reflection
- Mutuality
- Authenticity
- A willingness to not know
- Renewed intentionality

This allows for an integrated discussion of how relational qualities identified in participants' positive professional development experiences informed participants' subsequent teaching.

Question 1: How do you define professional development?

Participants characterize professional development in ways evidenced in the literature: *as learning that takes many forms, as a developmental process; and a self-directed endeavor.* These themes are discussed below.

Learning that Takes Many Forms

Participants identified *dialogue, curriculum development, engagement with students, mentoring, graduate school*, and *self-direction* as forms professional development can take. Their responses illustrate a variation and breadth in context, content, and format/process. For example, Shelley noted watching a movie and then reflecting on how it informed her thinking about her work as an educator, whereas Kristin named primarily formal means such as a workshop, seminar or week-long institute. Participants' responses also highlight that professional development can be something we

do alone and with others. Ultimately, participants confirm the range of needs among part-timers (Leslie and Gappa, 1993; Lyons, 2007) as well as illustrating the multiplicity of what one may learn from an experience.

Regardless of the type of professional development experience, all participants identified *dialogue* as essential to their professional development. It propels their learning. Mayra spoke emphatically about "being engaged in a larger discourse"; maintaining an awareness and tracking the developments in her field. Claude noted that "conversations with my wife" (also a teacher) routinely inform his thinking about his work. Aziza no longer has ongoing opportunities for dialogue, the central process used in the weekly faculty meetings she attended when teaching full-time. She said this is a tremendous loss; "a lot of pedagogy was discussed." Aziza learns a great deal from informal dialogue these days, when it happens. This spontaneous conversation is possible only recently by a physical space created at one her employing institutions:

> *... It makes a huge difference... the practical support...just having that space encourages you to talk to your colleagues and ... now it's crunch time [in the term] so people talk... then you can have some more exchange and learn a little bit more about the nature of the place...*

As Aziza teaches in three places, having this informal space in at least one of her employing institutions is important. It makes her more fortunate than some other part-timers.

Current perspectives of best practices in teaching adults have increasingly informed conference designs such that attendees are invited to dialogue more about their experiences and perspectives. Claude noted that "Faculty Day ... [is] good because of our colleagues. I get so much energy from my colleagues...from their enthusiasm, their spirit." Michael and Julie identified the conference format as well. Julie also described a

course she was taking, in which her instructor builds in ample opportunities for dialogue with others in the course, all of whom are teaching in her field. The formal course structure coupled with time for this degree of discussion meets two of Julie's current professional development needs: engagement in a learning community, and "intellectual challenge…I want something demanding where I get evaluated." Dialogue is a staple for professional development.

Each of the nine participants noted *curriculum development* as a professional development experience. Aziza talked about how pivotal this had been to her growth as a teacher: "… [We were] teaching courses together and developing courses…every year. I loved it because I had a lot of freedom...I was…in charge of the feminist studies department…and then…gender studies…It was exciting…" Bill spoke passionately about being able to teach what he wants to learn more about. He framed it as one of the perks part-time faculty have *because of* their status:

> *...the courses that I teach tend to be very much in line with my own interest, which has always been psychology and counseling. So I teach Personality or...Human Development...As an adjunct professor, one of the perks is that you get to hone in on what you're interested in...*

Ross emphasized the process of trial and error in his curriculum development experiences:

> *…in a seminar, if people were bored to tears I could just see that things were not going well...so...I would go back and say, ok, what can I do differently...let's bring in more class discussion, let's get everyone talking about it, let's have a class project, let's divide them into small groups and...then have them come back and talk about what they came up with...realizing that it's the kiss of death to be up there for an hour and a half if it isn't working so you want to get them involved...[by] just trying different things...*

Many instructors can identify with Ross' experience. Whether working with new course content, a new student population, or teaching at the graduate level for the first time, we

go through this trial-and-error process as an expected part of the process. It enables us to find the methods that will most effectively guide students in making connections between material, themselves, ourselves, and our ways of knowing.

Shelley talked about a new ethics course she was preparing for:

> *…I was given this other course…and I was…clueless because I'd never taken an ethics class. So what do I do? I read voraciously. I asked for [previous] syllabi but never received them…So what I find myself doing is reading, trying to figure out what ethics means today, to me, to teachers, to leaders. There are so many layers. There's ethics in anything…What I was trying to figure out was what the students wanted…*

Teaching a course for the first time typically requires review of large amounts of content and synthesis prior to teaching the course. Although potentially labor intensive, Shelley periodically takes on a new course with one institution that she has a longstanding, "good relationship" with: "I'll teach anything within the field [for them]."

Eight of the nine participants identified *engagement with students* - both their interactions with them and through reading their written work – as important to their professional development. Mayra said "I learn all the time from my students and…I'm their student ….and so…when they bring something to the table …I'm like, wow, let me think about it this way…" Bill emphasized interactions with students as well: "it's what you get back from the students… it's a lot of the interchange in the classroom. It's all…an experience that helps you get better, enriches your whole…that's part of the reason you keep doing it…" Claude said, "…Our profession is educating students, so I guess they educate me too". He elaborated at a later point on how much he learns in content and process from students:

> *…in this class, I literally learned a tremendous amount from research I would never have done… I've had people report on diverse things… and the list is long. So there's actual information that they teach me… [And] they also bring their life stories that are often difficult and inspiring and heartbreaking …*

In Ross' current teaching setting, students are required to send up to seven packets[21] during the term. In a residency format, faculty advisors work within a broad interdisciplinary framework. As a result they read studies on topics they might not otherwise seek out on their own. For Ross, learning from students in this way is a big part of why he enjoys teaching in a residency format:

> *...I think if I were teaching a [traditional] class...with 15 students, it would be all the same subject... [Here] there are lots of different students doing lots of different things. At a regular college I wouldn't have a student teaching me about feminist theory... [And] I don't have time to read about everything. It's like...being the president doing your little review every morning about the state of the world.*

As a Developmental Process

Additional professional development forms that participants note point to how one's professional development needs change over time. For example, the course Julie is taking she identifies as professional development. Ross spoke of not having any formal "how-to-teach" professional development during his graduate training which, in those early years, he wish he's had. Reflecting back he identified informal experiences that had unquestionably informed his teaching pedagogy and practice, and that more recently these were informal experiences as well. Bill said "...I might when I was younger, have thought of it as defined courses or the structured courses you were taking but now I have a broader definition of anything that helps you develop as an educator, as a teacher and that helps you get better." Similarly, Shelley said "anything that engages, enhances, inspires, and encourages my teaching practice." "Just being a lifelong learner" informed Mayra's professional development. Participants suggest a transformation over time to a broader, more open way of obtaining professional development by taking one's daily life

[21] In residency formats, students plan studies during the actual residency with their Faculty Advisors; they carry out the studies over the 'semester', which is approximately six months in length.

experiences and intentionally reflecting on how they might inform one's professional development. It follows that as one gains more experience, one may require less of the 'how to."

Aziza, Shelley, Julie, Bill, and Eleanor identified *graduate school* as the next step in their professional development. Julie began graduate school in the summer of 2007. Bill and Eleanor said it was a transformative experience. Aziza talked extensively about how graduate school provided her with much she was hungry to learn. She completed her degree five years ago. Years back when she was a full-time faculty member, Aziza and her colleagues focused on "always being better in terms of our teaching and on students' needs as well...there was no focus on research, paper writing, meeting with other faculty from other institutions..." Once laid off, her needs for these other kinds of development grew. Shelley describes her decision to pursue doctoral study:

> *...I was just more desperate to be in a larger discourse. And as an off-campus faculty member, you weren't even on campus for the whole, just during the residency and then everybody's away...it was before e-mails...nobody ever calls...there was very little communication. It was incredibly isolating... I had no place for an exchange of ideas...and we're talking years here, from '89 to 2001, I would do workshops...I could never afford to go far so I had to stay in the general area. But I do have a whole list of other things I did and my reading was voracious because I was just hungry and then I had to go back to school... [So]I decided the smartest thing I could do was...to take some courses that I could put the credits into my degree, because I hadn't been in a classroom for thirty years. So that was 2002...*

All participants are among a significant number of part-timers who understood their choices. As aspiring academics, they knew that opting out of graduate school would probably mean piecing together part-time contracts for the rest of their teaching career, in light of current hiring trends[22]. Further, the graduate school experience promises the

[22] Each participant is pursuing or has completed graduate school. As aspiring academics, Aziza, Shelley, and Mayra represent the plight of the part-timer who has completed doctoral study. Julie is just beginning

stimulation in both content and process absent in most part-timers' experience. For Shelley, returning to school was *the* way to acquire membership in an ongoing learning community. Doctoral study also gave her easier access to conferences showcasing individuals "big in the field." She wanted to learn everything she could from them.

That Shelley's professional development needs continue to shift now that she has completed formal study is not surprising. When asked how she seeks out professional development now, she said:

> *...Good question...I'm not basic 101...A fifteen-week class feels long now. I've been to workshops lately [and]day-long conferences...[At a recent one with] national social workers... the keynote was fine and then I was ready to leave ... at this point in my life it's hard for me to find new, rich, textured information. I'm frustrated because I don't know how to get it now...I've gotten to a certain place where I'm not impressed with their credentials, or their glitter. I just want to say, 'hey, I really love this idea.' I can actually ask questions instead of just being in awe...*

Having recently presented her first workshop at a small conference, Shelley says "now I need to get myself into it as a presenter situation. That will be my next professional development." When I asked her what led her to identify this as her next step, she said "I think there's a place where I keep looking for other people to be the experts. And I think I've got some expertise...I've got to present those ideas to peers to get back what I need now. It's not just company that I'm going in search of." Shelley wants a learning community of her peers, which in this case would be those who attend something she presents, and to create opportunities where she can not simply present, but facilitate inquiry and dialogue as well.

As a Self-Directed Endeavor

Least surprising is that most participants identified self-directed learning as the

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her doctoral work. As freelancers, Eleanor and Bill are currently "content" with their mix of teaching with other part-time work. As expert/specialists, Brian and Ross teach in addition to their full-time positions.

hub of their professional development wheel. They must essentially assess, identify, pursue, and pay for their professional development needs. Reflecting back, Eleanor said "it was always me in support of my own development as a human being and as a professional."

Claude's experience is no different: "I'd have to say it's been...mostly my own efforts..." Shelley's description above of her new course prep illustrates self-direction at its best. Having received no syllabi from the institution, she read as much as she could in order to get a handle on what ethics meant to her. She adds: "I really have to try and figure out what the issues are for me and try to create something with the class and if not, I'm just sort of building a portfolio of materials for us to explore. I don't know what else to do with it." She decides what she needs to do, establishes a plan, and knows it will happen only if she self-directs the process.

Eleanor points to the crucial role intentionality plays in whether or not someone succeeds in self-directed efforts: "I'm always looking for things that I can bring into what I'm doing." Mayra speaks to this intentionality as well: "if you are intellectually curious, if you want to know and experience more, that's all professional development because everything is useful in what you do." She not only suggests the meaning one makes from any and all experiences can then inform one's professional development, but she highlights one must intentionally make that meaning through critical reflection.

Ross said:

> *...I know that generally in the sciences, that I don't...certainly as a graduate student...I was a teaching assistant,[and] that was basically when I was involved in teaching laboratory classes, [but] that...was the extent of learning how to be a teacher...there is no formal development program for any kind of faculty that I know of, at any university that I've been in...I haven't really had any except for...as a*

working scientist you give talks, trying to communicate findings...it is something that you do, so you learn that way...These things are a skill set...

Not only has Ross' professional development been primarily on-the-job training, but he has worked actively to understand the degree to which he was an effective teacher, and then designed ways to work at improving his instructional practices.

Seeking consultation from someone is part of this self-direction. The person individuals seek out for informal mentoring is someone they perceive as knowledgeable. Ross named *mentoring* as a type of professional development, recalling informal dialogue over the years with colleagues who were 'like a mentor' and became pivotal to his learning. "I've asked some people what they've done... [I] use them the way some people use mentors..." When I asked if he had specific people he would call mentors he said, "Never a formal mentor...I have had special teachers who I've asked things, who would give me ideas. I actually do the same thing at [the school where I currently teach]...people are good at that." A faculty member who is willing to chat once in a while is a primary lifeline in part-timers' professional development.

The above discussion reiterates the fact that part-timers must initiate most if not all professional relationships as well. Participants' responses further point out how critical the part-timer's intentionality is to the success of those self-directed efforts. Ross said he is currently working to establish relationships with his colleagues and his employer.

Claude is the sole participant who has any meaningful relationship with his employer. He stressed his belief that the part-timer must take most of the responsibility in establishing and cultivating this relationship:

...Even though we're adjuncts, I never had the attitude of '... They're not paying me much so I'm not going to give much.' No, I tried to give and it's probably because of

> *loyalty to [my boss] and I do like the school..." You have to press the flesh...you have to be seen...you have to be a presence constantly. I see it very much as the individual motivating herself. The things that they do for you on the top are marginal, often just rinky- dink stuff. The stuff that you do for yourself, that's what really counts. As adjuncts we're much more aware of... that. I mean, we're frontiers people. You're out there on the cutting edge; I won't say cutthroat, but it's very pragmatic...We're always hustling. That's the life for the adjunct...constant hustling. That's part of the professional development, is learning how to do that... It's like politics. I think its karma, professional karma. It's whatever you give in some way comes back to you and that's the way it should be...it's a relationship...*

The number of times Claude referenced this relationship in a positive light speaks volumes about the significant influence it has had on his flourishing.

Participants' additional professional development experiences included broader contexts and perceptions. Eleanor initially said "...it's how we develop competency...how I continue to add to my store of knowledge and home field in terms of what I need to know to do my job well as a faculty member." Shelley states "...anything that engages, enhances, inspires, and encourages my teaching practice...to connect and reflect and integrate knowledge..." Mayra reported "it depends on where you're locating it and where you're living, and what that means", emphasizing the central role the educator's context plays in defining professional development:

> *... Part of professional development actually just means being a lifelong learner...The notion of professional development sounds as if it means it includes institutional support when you think about it. Especially developing a corporation and maybe do a ropes course, or maybe you do a seminar on working with difficult people...but if you are intellectually curious, if you are wanting to know and experience more, that's all professional development because everything is useful in what you do... So there is a formalized professional development and then there's just moving through the world and wanting to contribute to a pluralistic world and being hungry for contact or engagement with people who are doing the same thing you're doing...it's really basic: it's about learning and reflecting on practice...*

Musing about what she might consider professional development in the near future, Shelley said "Part of it might be going to build houses on the Mississippi coast...There's a leadership piece that I know I haven't gotten to yet...I don't know..."

Participants' responses support what the literature suggests: what one experiences as professional development is informed by that individual's unique career trajectory, one's personality, previous learning experiences, and supports and barriers throughout that trajectory make up the constellation of factors that inform their perceptions of professional development (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). These elements coupled with one's current professional context inform one's current professional development needs.

Question 2: Consider professional development experiences you would identify as positive: Tell me about one that stands out to you. Who was there? What was the context? How did it feel? What stands out to you about it (the high point)?

Participants' identified positive professional development experiences are summarized in Table 3 (see p. 125). Five participants identified two experiences. As noted in Chapter 4, it was assumed that participants would identify a professional development experience provided to them through one of the institutions where they currently teach or had previously taught. Having recognized this assumption, participants were encouraged to identify any professional development they deemed positive. Six of the nine participants identified professional development experiences they had a significant number of years ago, long before they became a part-time instructor. Gleaned from their responses are the following themes: *sustained experiences* and *learning with others.*

Sustained Experiences

Eight of the nine participants identified a positive professional development experience that transpired over some period of time. Shelley's experience was a one-week institute during which participants met each day into the evening. These experiences ranged from one week to one semester, to two years, and for three

participants, many years. Most of the nine participants said the experience was to a large degree experiential.

Table 3

Positive Professional Development Experiences

PARTICIPANT	POSITIVE EXPERIENCE	LENGTH OF EXPERIENCE
Shelley	1. Participating in a training provided to train future facilitators 2. Graduate school	one week
Mayra	1. Participating on a state-wide committee in the planning of a conference	one year, meeting once a month
Claude	1. Curriculum development	ongoing
Michael	1. Curriculum development	one semester
Kristen	1. Participating in a graduate course with colleagues	one semester
Bill	1. Working with a team of educator/counselors in an alternative school for 10-17 year olds 2. Teaching adults	years
Eleanor	1. Pairing up with seasoned faculty to plan, teach, and evaluate curriculum provided to graduate students in Teacher Education; 2. Training/working as a facilitator for a campus adventure-based organization	2 years 4 years
Aziza	1. Working with colleagues when a full-time faculty member 2. Graduate school	weekly
Ross	1. Seeking out seasoned faculty for informal mentoring	ongoing

Learning with Others

Whether with one person or a number of people, learning with others was central to eight of nine participants' positive experience. Two identified mentoring experiences. Six identified learning communities. Their experiences represent what the literature suggests about common characteristics among learning communities: three incorporated a facilitator; four participants participated voluntarily while two were required to participate based on their staff status; and the size of each communities varied (Cox, 2001; Palmer, 2004; Shulman, 2000; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002).

Participants' descriptions provide ample evidence of the presence of relational qualities. Engaging in dialogue and critical reflection in an established learning context of relational awareness and mutuality appeared to go hand in hand in making these positive experiences, as established in the literature (Cox, 2001; Palmer, 2004; Shulman, 2000; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Eleanor emphasized how valuable dialogue was in both curriculum planning and debriefing following teaching and facilitating. The dialogue created a forum for collegial engagement, an opportunity to voice one's thoughts and ideas, to listen and to critically reflect:

> *...we'd get pizzas and we'd sit around, three or four of us for an hour or two... and talk it through. You look at the flow of the week-end, you look at structure and content and it was 'what worked' and 'what didn't work', what surprises were there? We looked at the group dynamic, what challenges there might have been... we looked at our own facilitation style...We also looked at working together so giving each other feedback about what we liked, what worked, what might we do differently. And in a lot ways it became self-managing because you learned very quickly how to do it. So the mentor was there and they helped to create the process...It was very positive and supportive, encouraging, and that was very, very powerful...*

Relational awareness is apparent and crucial to the success of Eleanor's group's goal. Critical reflection is evident as well. Eleanor's description points to mutuality in that colleagues frame their engagement - sharing, listening, responding and taking into

account the others' perspectives - as essential to the success of the group's goal. There appears to be encouragement toward authenticity in Eleanor's experience as a regular part of the debriefing process incorporated providing one another with feedback about what each thought worked, didn't work, and what ideas each had for one another regarding what might work better. The willingness to not know further supports the authenticity that this process encourages and cultivates. Giving one another feedback about facilitation style, what worked and what one might do differently, requires a commitment to these professional development relationships that includes giving and receiving honest feedback. Renewed intentionally - in this case, taking the feedback and trying something different the next time - appears well established as part of the benefit of this ongoing feedback loop.

Shelley's positive experience description also suggests a process facilitated during her week-long Equity Institute training that incorporated a relational context. Attendees were asked to critically reflect on their worldview and then discuss with one another what they understood about the development and the result of that worldview:

> *...It made me go through the exercises so I had to articulate them, so I could come to understand where I stood...all the assumptions we bring...that I've built on. I got that from that workshop. They talked about lookism; they talked about ageism, wealth... It was the first time I'd ever spent a focused amount of time really trying to assess that...*

By doing this in a learning environment that views each as learner and supporter of one another during the process, Shelley was asked to maintain a relational awareness and mutuality throughout the week. Critical reflection alone and with others led to a more honest self-appraisal with oneself. Some degree of authenticity and a willingness to not know appear a part of Shelley's learning context, as does her renewed intentionality as a result of participating in the Institute.

Julie's description of how her course instructor's teaching style welcomed class dialogue suggests a number of relational qualities:

> *Sometimes he lets us decide...he'll stop and let us just talk it out. If we're trying to figure something out, we'll talk and then he'll just jump in at the end...I'm one of those people that can kind of ramble, I'm not really sure what I want to say, but I'll just be talking, and ...he'll say 'Keep going...keep going'...and I'll say 'I'm not really sure where I'm going with this'...*

Aziza's description of her weekly faculty meetings and Bill's description of his regular staff meetings strongly suggest the presence of relational qualities, as discussed in the following section.

Although not identified as such, collaboration appears to be a quality that made this experience positive for a number of participants including Eleanor, Mayra and Aziza. Collaboration typically results from working with another or others in a context that allows each to think out loud, listen, and inform the other and visa versa; effective collaboration requires teamwork and cooperation. It requires a relationship that at a minimum requires relational awareness, critical reflection, and mutuality. Collaboration identified by participants came through the process of learning through dialogue and critical reflection.

Question 3: What was at the heart of this experience?

Participants' responses point to their having felt varying degrees of *freedom*, both during and as a result of participating in their positive experience. Indications of this are noted in the phrases "the room to be creative," "freedom to be creative," "permission to try new things," and "freedom to pursue own interests." Freedom can allow, invite, or foster flourishing. It is an open door through which one can pursue what motivates him or her, unencumbered. Experiencing this freedom appears to have encouraged participants to move forward in their work with a sense of trust. A number of

participants described their experience as transformational. Freedom can serve to fuel our passion and vision for our work.

Yet in order to feel that room, freedom, or permission, one must feel visible. Further apparent in participants' responses is the presence of acknowledgement *coupled with* validation or recognition as what was at the heart of their positive experience. Acknowledgement alone can communicate mere recognition of another's presence, as in 'confirming the receipt of'. Acknowledgement coupled with recognition or validation communicates to another not just that they exist, but that they matter; they are valued. Michael makes a distinction between acknowledgement alone and acknowledgement coupled with validation:

> *...I can't tell you how far a statement from above like "...I was just reviewing the records and notice that you've taught this adjunct course for 7 years now...that is really cool that you've done that so often for our students" goes...More likely, [what] I hear [is] "we are switching the pay schedule...so instead of adjunct being paid twice a month, we are going to pay once in the middle of the semester and then again after you submit your grades... we've had trouble with other adjuncts making sure they get their grades in on time....so this should be an incentive...*

Each of the participants describes feeling acknowledged and recognized/validated in their positive experience:

- Shelley, through her requirement to examine her assumptions and worldview in the institute and dialogue with others about her assumptions; from positive feedback from instructors in her graduate program;
- Bill, in his weekly staff meetings where participants were encouraged to speak to their concerns and issues with one another; through teaching adult learners, where their creativity was sometimes "over the top";

- Aziza, through her weekly faculty meetings in which all acknowledged and recognized/validated each other's thoughts, ideas, opinions; during graduate school;
- Julie, through her graduate course in which her professor invites her to 'think out loud' with her peers;
- Michael, through receipt of a grant which allowed him to order instructional materials that enhanced course curriculum revisions;
- Eleanor, through receiving "an incredible amount of attention...you felt you had somebody who cared and was interested in you..." (both the teaching with seasoned faculty, and the adventure-based trip-leading debriefings;
- Ross, through the feedback and ideas he sought from his informal mentors (seasoned faculty); as a result of what he has learned over the years teaching;
- Claude, through the development of curriculum over two decades, and;
- Mayra, through the participation in the state-wide monthly meetings task force meetings, working to create a meaningful conference on transforming how the state responds to domestic violence.

Asking participants to examine the experience further brought descriptions that suggest relational learning contexts. At the heart of the experience was a process in which participants were acknowledged and recognized in a relational context. Shelley said that identifying her assumptions and understanding how these assumptions informed her worldview (up to that point) through critical reflection and dialoguing with others was pivotal, even to this day. Understanding her place in the "complex social system" dismantled her longstanding worldview. "You've got to honestly know who you are and

what you believe before you go out to teach, before you go out to be a leader. You've got to know where all your assumptions are coming from." Learning the origins of her assumptions and worldview in this learning community set the stage for a transformative experience. The freedom she felt as a result of these qualities increased her willingness to not know and experience greater authenticity.

Mayra reported "greater commitment" to the issue of domestic violence at the heart of her positive experience:

> *...the driving force in all of those instances and...the ways in which we came together around issues and coalitions, was commitment to the issue. And from desperate communities. So without the community of profits, because there's an understanding of issues, there's an understanding of challenges and there was a desire to have this conference be not just another conference...*

Mayra's use of 'we' suggests that many if not all in her learning community felt the rewards of working together. "...at that time... [of the] grassroots movement, people didn't have degrees behind their names...and we'd been working very hard to train law enforcement and...all of a sudden they're embracing it... " The task force was making a difference; putting the 'blood, sweat and tears' into it was paying off. Their efforts were the result of not only their acknowledgement and validation of one another of one another to the process, but the recognition they received from law enforcement as a result.

Bill said meeting with staff every week was "that hands-on experience and being given permission to try different things... it was a chance to keep things out on the table." He elaborated:

> *.....You're under pressure, you're working with kids that are there for reasons, and they're troubled kids. If you had problems with them, it created more tension and you'd know it would get played out among the staff, so it was a way to keep on working on how we're working together as a staff...It was not how most people see staff development in a sense of let's sit and work on our curriculum...it was more of a counseling session...*

In Bill's case, operating in a relational format supported the staff's becoming a 'well-oiled machine': it enhanced their collaboration toward providing what students needed to succeed by promoting authenticity and renewed intentionality.

Eleanor said "feeling validated as a seeker" was at the heart of her positive experience. She felt acknowledgement and recognition for her thinking, her ideas, and her actual teaching over the period she worked collaboratively with a seasoned faculty mentor, and in her adventure-based training debriefings. It follows that this ongoing acknowledgment/recognition would lead to increasing a willingness to not know, increasing authenticity and renewed intentionality.

Bill, Claude, and Michael identified institutional support - a relationship with their employer - as integral to what made their experience positive. Claude said "My feeling is that the one thing teachers most need and want is the chance to be creative, inventive, and free to follow their deepest instincts." It is evident that participants' feeling of being visible, through acknowledgement and recognition, led to a sense of freedom to further identify and try their own ideas. Particularly in sustained experiences such as Eleanor's, where there are significant opportunities to critically reflect and then apply what one is learning, the sense of freedom is continually reinforced when acknowledgement is coupled with recognition/validation. It follows that this ongoing process would encourage deeper levels of one's willingness to not know and authenticity, and thus, foster a learner's flourishing.

Question 4: What were the lasting benefits?

Six of the nine participants identified specific lasting benefits from this positive experience. Shelley spoke passionately about the Equity Institute experience

informing her developing pedagogy and practice to this day.

> *It gave me so many tools that I could use, and still do...facilitation skills, information, and a real way to articulate my beliefs...I think you can call it a tool kit, a way to start explaining social systems...it was the first time I'd ever spent a focused amount of time really trying to assess that...articulate it...now I don't think I understood that then; I understand it now.*

Bill said that his experience "just...opened up the parameters of what good teaching can be about." Eleanor reported the most important lasting benefit from her positive experience as "the self-reflection part...which is having to take pause and if some asks the question of you from your perspective: 'What worked? What didn't [work]?' Aziza said the most lasting benefit was experiencing how to "learn along the way...I enjoy responding...I wouldn't teach if I didn't feel I learn something each time..." Mayra noted that "when I can take away something new that can be applied in my own practice... where I don't feel it was a waste of time...when it helps me get clarity on my own thinking on issues ...I put my energy in..." Claude said his benefit from working with his employer throughout the years, her consistent encouragement to create curriculum, continues to reinforce his creativity and his love for teaching.

Participants suggest a relationship between acknowledgement coupled with validation and the freedom it engenders. Participants speak to how repeated acknowledgement plus validation fostered further continual feelings of freedom. The bi-directional reinforcement this illustrates illuminates how powerful a role relational context can play in fostering flourishing. As a result of this process, participants identified *passion, energy, motivation, vision* and *self-directed learning* as the lasting benefits of their positive experience. The experience increased their ability to sustain themselves (see Figure 2, p. 135). Participants' reports lend support to the findings substantiated in the research about the benefits learning community participants report,

including increased openness to both oneself and others; critical reflection of one's own - and others' - ideas; collaboration, and increased self-awareness. The ability to step back from one's way of relating and conceptualizing in order to hear and appreciate another's point of view is supported when one feels equally heard. Learning communities provide acknowledgment and validation. Participants' description' of what was at the heart of the positive experience suggest that their presence was acknowledged and their thoughts and ideas were held as equally valuable as those of others in that experience. Feeling valued engendered self-trust and self-confidence, validating their authenticity which leads to an experience of freedom. This enabled them to move forward in their teaching from a cultivated ability to sustain one's self. It suggests that the consistent validation fuels one's own capacity because of the increased freedom and further validation.

Question 5: How did this positive professional development experience inform your subsequent teaching?

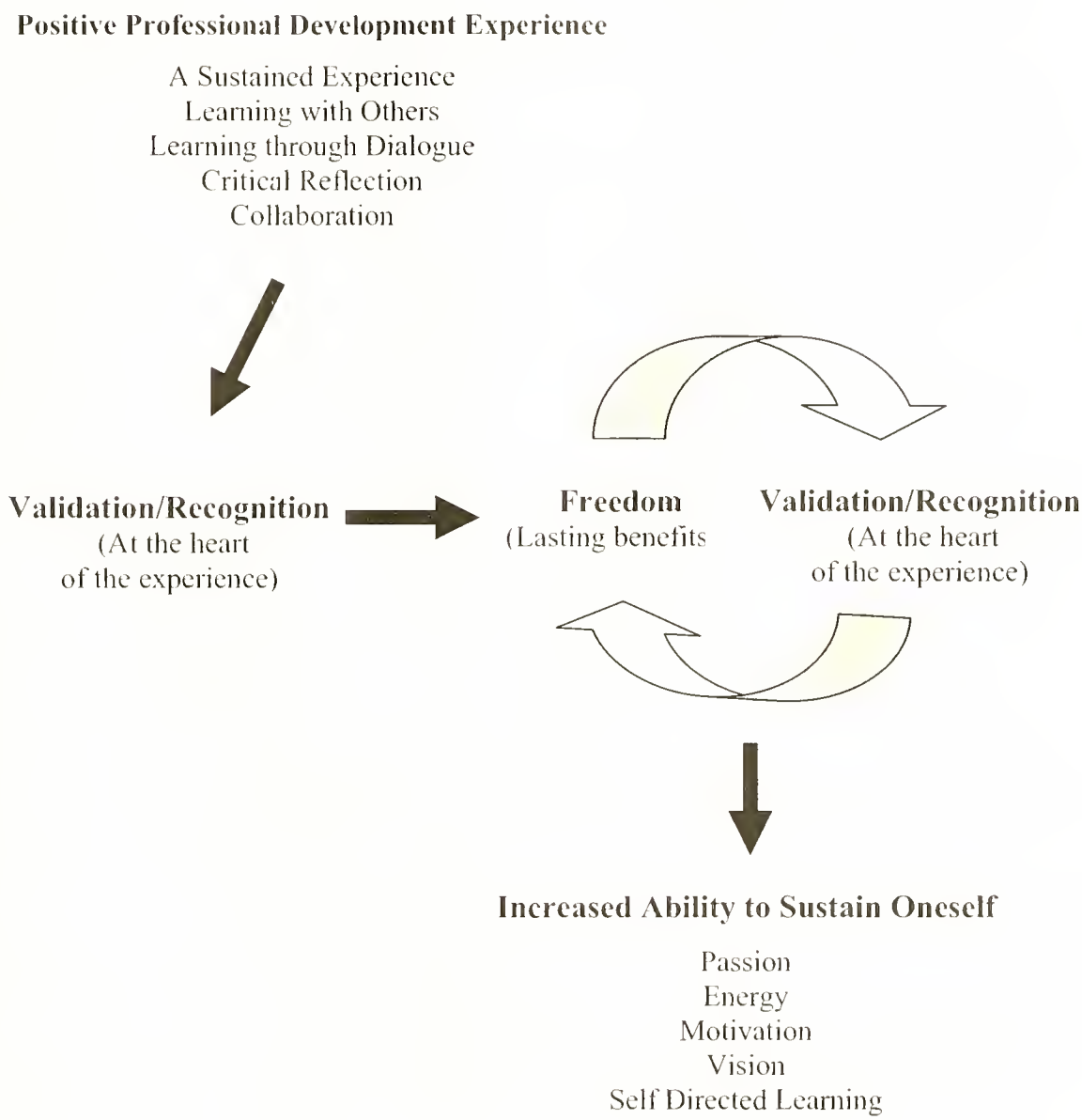
Each of the nine participants provided specific examples of ways these professional development experiences led them to critically reflect on how they conceptualize, prepare, teach, and cultivate relationships with their students. Three spoke directly to the influence the positive experience had on their relationship with their employing institutions. Overarching themes that emerged in this category were that it *increased one's focus on students' flourishing; increased one's authenticity and openness to self-development,* and *engendered mutuality with one's institution.*

Increased Participants' Focus on Students' Flourishing

How positive experiences informed participants' subsequent teaching illustrates a kind of generativity borne out of the lasting effects discussed above. Evident from participants' responses is their attempt to bring the meaningful, transformative aspects of

Figure 2

How Positive Professional Development Experiences Fosters Participants' Flourishing



their positive experience to their work as educators. Those lasting benefits appear to have served as guideposts, continuously informing both pedagogy and practice. Eleanor said this shift has taken time; "it didn't happen overnight." Participants express the desire

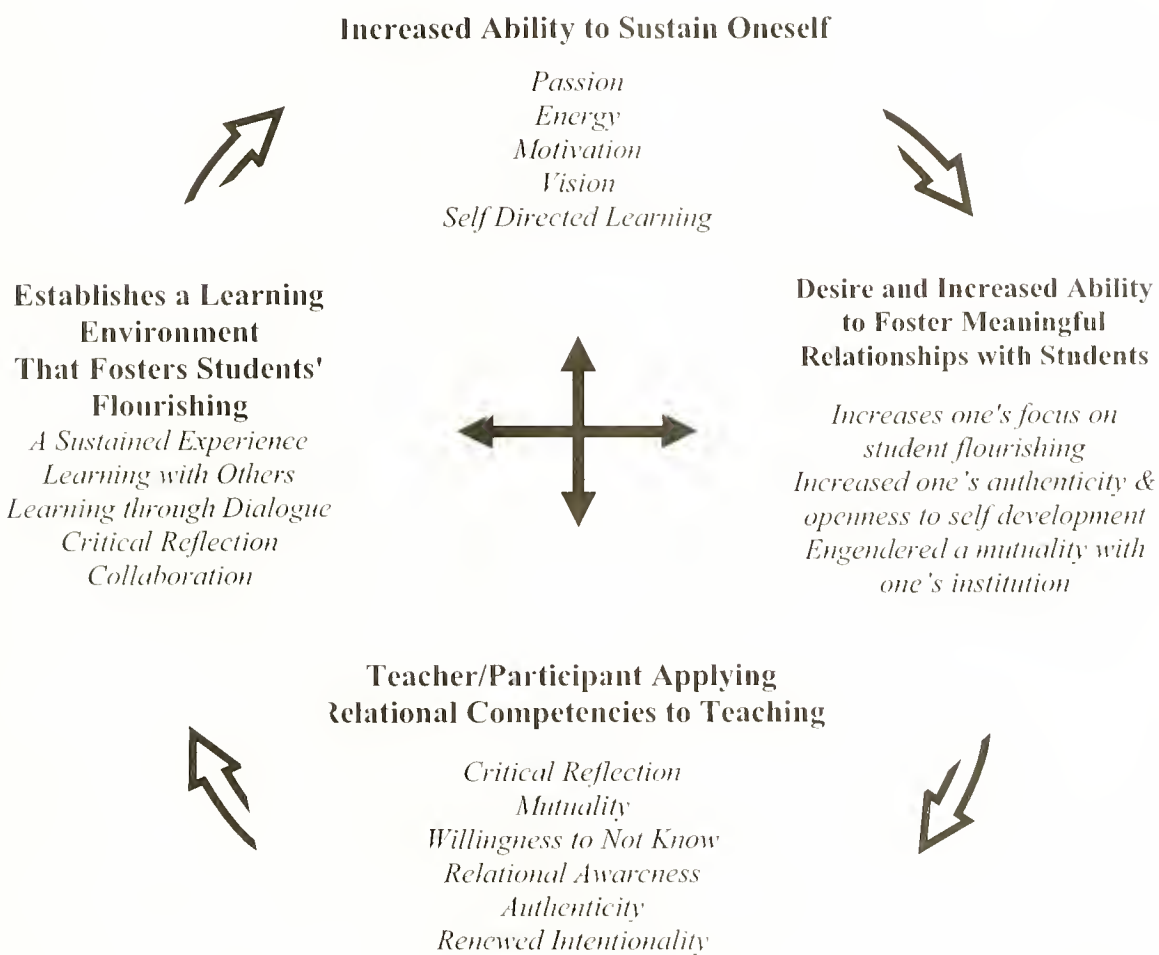
to create a learning environment - through carefully chosen content and a process, both experiential and reflective - in which students flourish. Based on their experience of flourishing, they are passionate about bringing their students this kind of experience. Many of the participants in this study said that the acknowledgement/validation led to a sense of freedom, which was at the heart of their positive experience. When we provide that arena in which learners can not only draw their own conclusions but identify further questions, we contribute to fostering this sense of freedom. Based on these analyzed responses, successful learner flourishing for some also requires a positive relationship mentor, supervisor, or that person overseeing part-time faculty, in which there is validation and/or acknowledgment beyond a contract and a paycheck. Eleanor states "... [in both settings these] were relationships with faculty or mentors who were people who I had deep respect for and had a connection with...it's the piece about being seen and being known..." Further, when the relationship is fostered and attended to over a period of time, both learner and teacher are invited to flourish. The emphasis on participants creating an environment where students 'wrestle' as they work to make meaning suggests how much participants value the relational context and what they hope to foster in this context. They intentionally focus on affirming students, supporting them, and engaging them in ways that encourage critical reflection and authenticity.

Having made significant meaning from those positive experiences, participants incorporated relational qualities in the learning environment with their students with the goal to foster meaningful learning. Figure 3 (p. 137) illustrates this progression. Eleanor revised her pedagogy and practice so that it more closely emulates the pedagogy and practice used by mentors in her positive experiences. She said the good teachers are

those who "...care about who you are [the student] as a person and your personal growth and development, as much as your professional development or the development of your

Figure 3

How Positive Professional Development Experiences Inform Subsequent Teaching



technical skills" and subsequently spends "more time emphasizing what [students are] doing right/the positive [instead of] what they're doing wrong/the negative". Bill said "...this is the path of life. I think more people move through life through encouragement and not through hearing what their deficits are all the time...I learned the importance of

affirmation." Shelley described the ways the Equity Institute experience continues to inform her approach to teaching: "I want…to have a passionate pedagogy… [I want to] liberate them…inspire them. And I think that that's…what people feel." Eleanor, Bill, and Shelley speak to the centrality of engaging students in course content through experiential and reflective methods. Bill said he tries to "reinforce the importance of allowing people to wrestle with things…instead of just giving them information…It's the engagement piece, getting them talking about how to apply the concepts…" Ross said that from his experiences, he aims "to treat advisees individually, and within the constraints of the [residency approach], use the advising skills I have developed from past experiences - all trial and error - to see what works for each student."

Increased One's Authenticity and Openness to Self-Development

A number of participants identified the importance they place on being authentic with their students. Mayra said she increasingly brought "the notion of me as learner, teacher, student, and human being" into her classroom. Eleanor worked to be more open with her students: "the best teachers are the ones that let their humanity show." Eleanor and Mayra illustrate their willingness to not know as also modeling their humanity. Educators' sharing aspects of their own lives can encourage students to do the same and thus enhance the relational learning context. To disclose to appropriate degrees one's humanity can decrease the distance between learners' perceptions of their teacher and the teacher's actual self. Shelley makes a point to "tell students stories about my experiences." She elaborates:

> *…I'm willing to be very honest about who I am…bringing my story and my struggles to understand it all. Let them… struggle on their own…I think that just pops people's eyes open, because they either know closeted lesbians who have been afraid to say who they are or they've never thought about adopting African American kids, or they*

have biracial nephews and they've never thought about the struggle that those children have in the white family...

Sharing one's self not only increases teachers' authenticity, it models how reflecting on one's life experience might lead to more meaningful learning. Further, the more learners see not knowing as a positive thing in a relational context, the more willing many will be in relationship to their peers and their teacher to not know.

Responses discussed above speak to an increased openness to learning as well. The willingness to not know opens the door to increased learning. Specifically, Eleanor said she grew "more excited about learning new things", and came to understand that she "can learn things from students too." Although both the Institute and graduate school have had significantly influenced Shelley's development as an educator, she focused on her recent graduate school experience as having "increased my sense of self, sense of knowing, and inspired me with new resources and new ideas." This supports the work of Cohen (1995), Cranton (2001) and Palmer (2004) who speak to the interrelationship.

Engendered Mutuality with the Institution

Two participants identified a relationship with an institution as how the positive experience informed his teaching. Claude said the ongoing positive relationship he has had with his faculty director has continued to infuse "administrative support and some job security and respect... [and it has encouraged me to continue]...personal initiatives regarding making myself more valuable to the institution." This relationship suggests the presence of a number of relational qualities. His relationship with his director was established in a context characterized by each of the six relational qualities discussed throughout this study.

Prior to his current teaching, Michael previously taught in two other places while doing doctoral study. His response underscores how a relationship with one's institution can increase his interest in fostering students' flourishing:

> *...when I feel taken care of and supported [by the institution], I feel more willing to pass that experience onto my students and will likely spend some extra time bringing that material back to them and generally, perform better in that particular class---I don't think it's a conscious thing all the time, but for me....there are likely times that I would have a choice between prepping for an extra hour...putting in that 110% for the class...and I'm more likely to put in that extra work if I feel like the place I work also puts in that extra support for me...I think the issue is one that is often kept quiet since few would admit to their bosses that they are "calling it in" or just recycling old course material because they are bitter about low course wages or lack of professional development funds. But I would guess that this happens often with adjuncts who teach. I don't think many directly take it out on their class...I know for me its more subtle....switching from grading essays to multiple choice ...and it can be worse than that...like when I only hear from them when I turn in grades a day late or getting lectured at during mandatory orientation sessions...the impact becomes worse when communication and support is reduced to that one-way channel, like if I don't hear from them unless there is a problem or unless they need to put a new rule in place...*

Michael's experience suggests that the kind of relationship some part-timers have with their employing institution could contribute in ways however small to learners' experiences. To what degree this could influence students' learning warrants further study.

Question 6: What gifts, skills and talents do you bring to your teaching?

Much of what participants identify as their gifts, skills and talents echo how their positive experience informed their subsequent teaching. By increasing their focus on students' flourishing, and increasing their authenticity and openness to self-development, participants perceive their having developed gifts, skills and talents that characterized their positive professional development experience. Participant responses indicate significant application of relational qualities to their relationships with their students. Participants suggest three primary themes in their successful teaching experiences:

positions relationships at the center of learning; brings more of the self; and *invites students' authenticity* (See Figure 4). Narratives suggest a significant interplay in how these gifts, skills, and talents manifest in participants' learning environments.

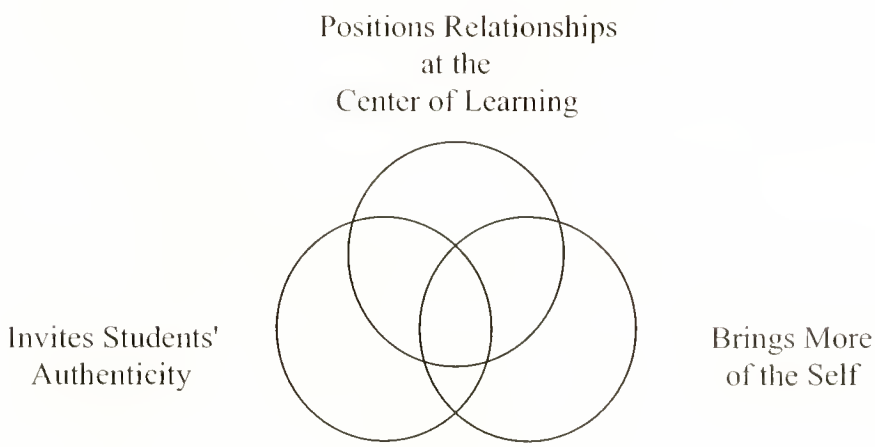
Positions Relationships at the Center of Learning

Participants emphasize that they make their *relationships with their students* a high priority. Mayra says:

> *...obviously if you are a teacher or faculty in front of a student and you're in an institution like this there is an imbalance of power that exists, but I do like talking about that... talking about how as a teacher and a student we can equally bring things into the relationship and we can value them equally. We're not equal; I don't believe in equality, it doesn't exist. But we can value what each brings to the relationship...*

Figure 4

Gifts, Skills and Talents Participants Bring to Their Teaching



Mayra acknowledges not just where the power lies, but makes sure the student understands this has no bearing on her worth and that Mayra recognizes her as a subject, a narrator.

Aziza has a similar goal:

> *I do make clear what my expectations are...I talk about the power relationship, where I hold power so that they are aware of that...I put all of that out on the table in the beginning...I don't play games and I don't humiliate students in the classroom. I ask for feedback...*

Being honest and 'up front' about how they see themselves in relationship to their students communicates to students the value they place on the relationship: they seek their students' input and value their perspective. Bill said "...somewhere I learned the importance of affirmation." This recalls the concepts of acknowledgement and validation participants described as at the heart of their positive professional development experience. These examples suggest ways that Mayra, Aziza and Bill bring relational awareness, critical reflection, and mutuality into their teaching.

Claude notes the inherent aspect of mutuality when one places such value on relationships with students: "I think we're human beings and it has to be part of the equation. Because if you don't love to be loved necessarily, but if you weren't loved in return [by students], it would make it tough. Because you have to make sacrifices and give a lot..."

This is a reminder that although teachers can inform learners on the first day of a class their expectations in terms of mutuality, some learners are not able to reciprocate. Michael deseribes one learner's response to his framing the teacher-learner relationship as a mutual one:

> *... I had a woman just last quarter who was in her early 50s or late 40s, and didn't know how to cut and paste, didn't know to spell check a document, didn't know how to send an e-mail attachment. We got into some heated discussions as to what was her responsibility versus my responsibility around preparing for the course materials and her asking for extra help. I'm pretty open in helping people but on some level people have to be responsible for asking for help before their assignment is due...*

Both of these examples illustrate a give-and-take that teachers tend to expect. When it is truly a mutual relationship, learners understand they are responsible with their teacher for success in their learning.

Some participants identified the skill of fostering relationships between learners. Michael said:

> *...it's being able to appreciate...the connection among the students. My first classes I like to, actually not teach any content and just have the class get to know each other, I think that investment during the first class pays off throughout the semester as long as people know each other, they know everyone's name, they know something about their classmates...getting the class to know each other...*

Michael's emphasis on encouraging learners to interact and get to know one another communicates that he values their familiarity with one another to a degree. Aziza approaches her first class meeting in a way that sounds as though it would have similar results: "I find time every semester at the beginning...to create an environment ...sometimes I do lots of exercises to get them to know one another, and me, and get them to articulate what's going on in their learning..."

Brings More of the Self

Participants *bring more of the self* to the learning environment by *sharing life experience* and *working to be authentic*. Shelley sees talking about her life as a gift to her students, first noting her recent completion of doctoral study. This provides her with an understanding of what her primarily adult learners juggle. She can empathize readily. "I bring that fresh experience...I get how hard it is to keep your life going and do research and raise kids and keep the process going...I bring my story and my struggles." Eleanor said she shares aspects of her life outside of work when appropriate.

A second aspect participants share is their passion for teaching and learning. Shelley said "I love what I'm doing. I think that brings a passion and an energy..."

Julie said "I enjoy people…I like working with students…I like having a good time. I think my enthusiasm is one of my gifts." Brian said "I just love the art of teaching."

As important to participants is their *working to be authentic*, evidenced by numerous references in their narratives. Julie recalled an interaction with one of her students:

> *… I was working on a paper, and one of my students said 'you're still in school?' and I'm like, 'yea'…and he said 'I thought you'd be out by now' and I said 'so did I'…So, then he says 'that's really cool, what are you working on?' And I think when they find things out like that I think it opens them up a little bit more. It's authenticity…*

Julie anticipates her decision to disclosure about school will invite her student to 'open up' to his learning in a positive way. Claude's decision to be honest with a student brought different consequences:

> *…we were talking about the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Star Spangled Banner, and [this student] wanted to know whether I actually stood for the Star Spangled Banner and I would do the Pledge. I said I will because I respect my fellow citizens and I know people have relatives who have died and I don't want to hurt their feelings or insult them. But if you want to ask me, to be intellectually honest, do I believe in loyalty oaths? No. That is not the way to show your loyalty. Go vote. Contribute to your community. This Pledge, the worst scoundrel in the world can do the Pledge. It doesn't mean anything. It's just a symbol, it's empty. She wouldn't speak to me from that point on. And she lives [locally so]…I see her around. But she turns her head. She could not take that. Because she asked me, I'm not going to lie. I tried to do it in a nice way and say, yes, I really respect my fellow citizens, but do I believe in loyalty oaths? What if I believed you had to say the Pledge every time you had to go to the bathroom? You want to go? You have to say the pledge. What, you don't want to say it? Is that being disloyal? No…*

Claude's experience reminds one of the possibility that placing relationships at the center of learning coupled with relational authenticity does not always foster reciprocal authenticity. Increasing authenticity evolves in a context where a person feels the expression of it is welcomed and that it bears no negative consequences. Being authentic with one's teacher can be or become a risk too large for some students due to shame or embarrassment they fear may result. Some fear that being more authentic will affect their

grade. Teachers who model authenticity by bringing more of themselves to the learning environment have tremendous power over their students' perceptions of how being more authentic will benefit them. Authenticity is not synonymous with self-disclosure. Cranton (2001) argues that although one's authenticity is measured by others, it is based on self-awareness and self-development. Self-disclosure should not be equated with greater authenticity

Teachers' honest response of "I don't know" supports their authenticity. Shelley identified this as a skill in reference to teaching a multicultural ethics course:

> *...The more I get into this, the less I feel like I know... So all of that is what I realize I don't know... I can say here's a way to think about this. Is it individual or is it institutionalized? You can use that basic question to interrogate any issue that you encounter...*

Mayra said "being fallible and not having to answer but being able to...think about it and consider what that means..." is her skill. She elaborated:

> *...I value, I try to model, not knowing, and what something means. I also think I am modeling...vulnerability... I teach multicultural awareness in psychology...so I never would ask the student to do something that I'm not going to do with a group of people. So... disclosure. I use self in a lot of... I love bell hooks' Teaching to Transgress. The notion of me as learner, teacher, student, and human being. And perhaps I might have, I do have some skills to facilitate or create a container where someone finds that agency within themselves...So I value that and along with that my ability to say I'm wrong ...*

Mayra actually describes a set of instructional practices she uses that contribute to students' experience of her as authentic: being honest; being vulnerable; and being willing to say she is wrong. Each of these actions communicate to her students that she values, and is willing to be, authentic. Further, her view of herself as learner, teacher, student and human being illustrates how she brings all of herself to the learning environment. Shelley describes how actively engaging as a learner herself supports her

students in their learning: "I'm asking them to pay attention to who they are and what they're learning and what they're going to do with it…I'm asking them hard questions, but I'm doing the work myself."

Participants' responses unanimously point to the value they place on working to be authentic with their learners. Whether or not some teachers unexpectedly feel vulnerable with their students is likely based on individual years of experience, pedagogy, and practice. Participants' authenticity in their relationships with their students supports participants' goal to invite students' narrative, their individual knowledge

Invites Students' Authenticity

Participants identify as a gift, skill or talent their ongoing invitation to learners to participate, share their thoughts, ideas, opinions, and in general, their feedback. In order for learners to be able to accept this invitation, teachers must create environments that support the relationship at the center of the learning environment. Identified dimensions in this theme are: *creates a meaningful learning environment* and *creates a safe learning environment.*

Participants' efforts to *create meaningful learning environments* reflect what the literature suggests about what makes learning meaningful: they incorporate learning formats that ask students to critically reflect on life experience in addition to participating in experiential activities. Aziza describes how she does this:

> *…[I want them] to articulate what is going to help their learning…and what I expect, not rote memorization but an ability to use that understanding in certain places, etc., [and]I ask for feedback. I want to know how they're doing, what they're doing, what's helpful, what's not, what do they need, stuff like that. I constantly ask for that…And some classes I like to check in every time we meet…*

A feedback structure invites continuous dialogue and critical reflection about what is and is not working, and what changes could be considered. Shelley speaks to this in a general way:

> *...knowledge is personal; it's not just knowledge that is floating around. How do we integrate it, embody it? I think that's what I'm trying to get students to do is embody knowledge so that they go out into the world as a more aware, open-minded, compassionate, less judgmental...*

Bill said "I do the activity-oriented thing...so people are up out of their seats doing stuff rather than sitting there taking it in." Eleanor said:

> *...I think I'm pretty good at taking really complex information and putting it out in a way that is accessible to people so they can hear it...from my experiential background... I'm a pretty good facilitator, of learning and of group process, and I'm even pretty good at designing meaningful learning opportunities for people...*

Eleanor added that she creates a more meaningful learning environment by being a good listener and encourager.

Ross' residency requires faculty to respond by letter to students' studies. This creates an interesting challenge to how Ross creates a meaningful learning environment. Yet his response strongly suggests he does just that:

> *...I'm a good reader. I can pick out what it is they're saying...what their interests are...what their conclusions and assumptions are...where they need to beef up their support...just as a general editor, being able to challenge them when they're making undefended assumptions...Being able to write clearly & be specific with them about what's good about their work, what needs some work...trying to challenge them to look at other things...trying to show enthusiasm. When you're talking about what works, you get that passion going...that enthusiasm...the response is...'Thank you for your questions. You got me thinking.' I get letters back following the response that I sent them that showed they actually read it...and visa versa. If they vehemently disagree, it got them engaged to counter my arguments. I'm fine with that too, as long as they're thinking. I love that. As long as they're thinking in more depth about what it is they [originally wrote]...*

As important to creating a meaningful environment is *creating a safe environment.* As a gift, skill, or talent, Bill said "...I [work to] set the tone of

acceptance…support and risk taking…where people don't feel like they're going to be hung out to dry, if they do the work they're going to be okay…" Aziza identifies her skill at this as well:

> *…I am skilled at creating those spaces; creating that space in the room among people where they can suspend their fear of each other, their learning, of challenging beliefs that they've held onto, where they can suspend that for a bit…and…go down some other ways. I think I'm good at that. It's the thing about the moment in teaching… I do love being able to do that…especially for those people who have not had the chance to blossom in other places… just seeing them put it together, that's an exciting thing…*

Eleanor said: "I think that the nature of some of the stuff I teach really can be volatile, and sometimes emotional, and I'm pretty good at not trying to stuff it down…I can go with it…keep it there [so that] people can explore it and not do damage…"

When asked what he brings to his students, Claude said

> *…Compassion. The more I teach, I only teach one course really, the development of the soul…how to be a more fully realized human being. That's really all I care about and everything else is just a way to do that…just…trying to improve their ability to speak what's true about themselves…It's really idealistic, I know. It's a love affair with humanity…*
> *…I see so much horrible stuff so the classroom is my utopia. That's where I try to create the world where I would like to live in, where everybody has a voice, everybody is respected, we laugh, you can speak freely, but you also have to take ownership and listen to others. There's no hierarchy, there are no star students and dunce caps…I think I have a talent for seeing the best things about people, maybe that they don't see themselves. So when they see that I see that and speak to that, they want to be that…that's what the best teachers did for me…*
> *…I do want to challenge people intellectually except that I have to be honest, my first goal is to reach them spiritually and emotionally and awaken them. I can't do that without being compassionate…I have to go back to my own development over the years…the [teachers] who reached me where the ones that just believed in me…somebody who actually noticed me and wrote something on paper or said something…*

Claude works to create an environment in which all are urged to have a voice while at the same time all must respect one another. He requires all students to share the responsibility in maintaining this safe environment. He brings compassion and fairness.

He requires relational awareness and mutuality, hoping to foster authenticity. Claude's narrative, reminiscent of Freire's consciensization, is a powerful composite of elements that characterize relational contexts.

Bill said that he gets excited about "touching the emotions in the heart and mind", his summary of the positive feedback he's gotten over the years. "I think we all have that capacity to get concepts and information in an intellectual way, but the stuff that affects our lives that we're really passionate about...end up being those things that really grab us inside."

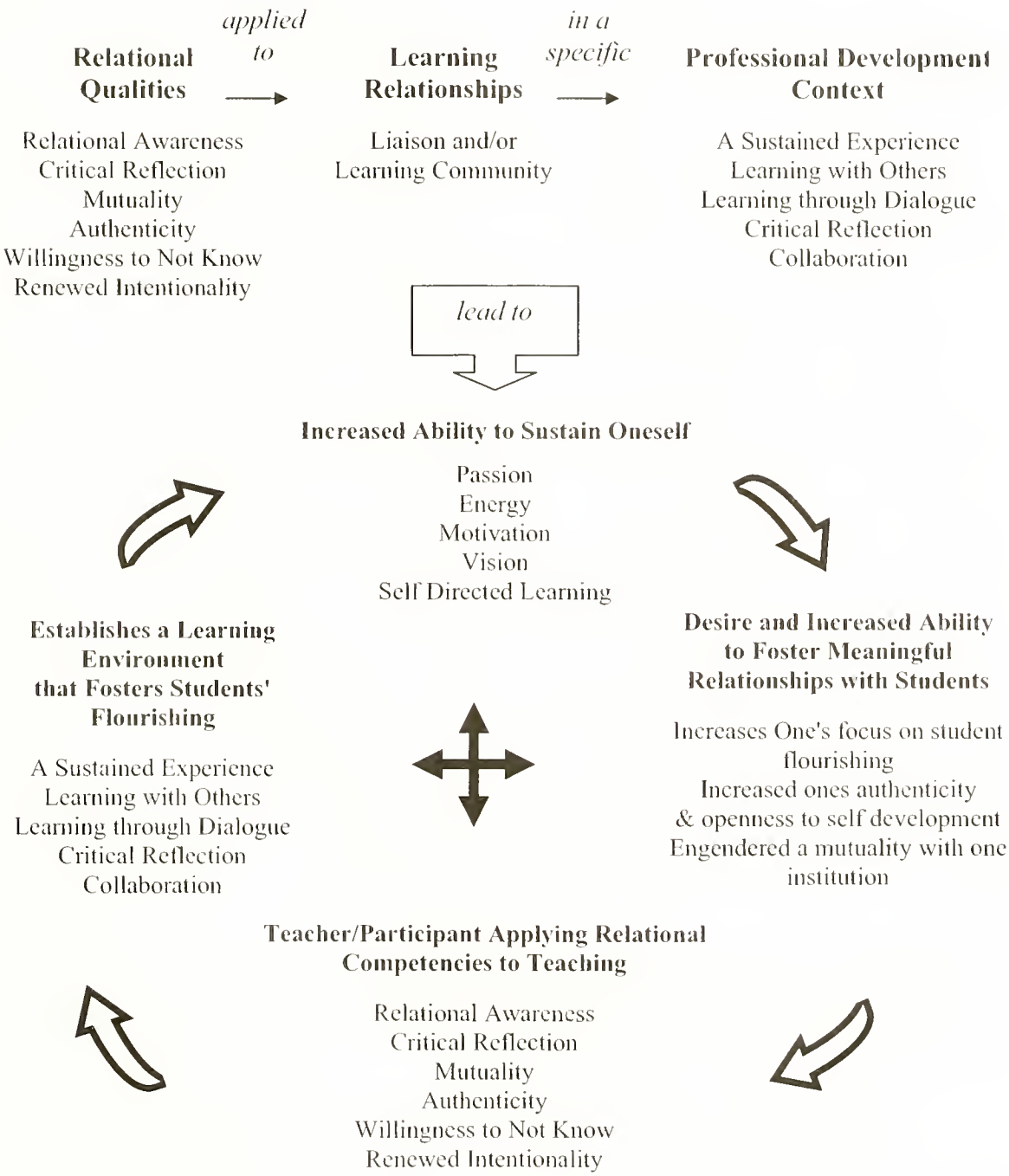
Michael is someone who works full-time and his teaching relates specifically to his work experience. He explains how this supports his teaching: "we're listening, feeding back, and explaining something in a way that can help others understand. We're taking someone from a position of not knowing or curious about something to a position of growth and change."

The gifts, skills and talents participants bring to their teaching environments reflect aspects of what contributed to the positive professional development experience they identified. The environment they create is characterized by a sustained experience, learning with others, learning through dialogue, critical reflection, and collaboration. Within this environment each of them brings one or more gifts, skills and talents that contribute to their positioning relationships at the center of learning, bringing all of the self and inviting students' authenticity.

Analysis of participants' narratives to this point suggests powerful implications for the kind of generativity that teaching in a relational context can have (see Figure 5, p. 150). The progression is reminiscent of Erikson's (1963) *middle adulthood*, one of eight

Figure 5

Learning Relationships as Professional Development that Foster Part Time Faculty Flourishing



stages he proposed in his theory of psychosocial development. Briefly, Erikson called this stage *generativity versus self-absorption or stagnation.* Those successfully mastering this stage care for others and contribute to the betterment of society. Erikson believed middle adulthood, from the age of 25/35 to 55, was the period during which relationships in one's work, community and family take on significantly greater meaning. In fact, he identified teaching, writing, invention, the arts and sciences, social activism, and any pursuit with the goal of establishing and guiding the next generation as those professions/actions that exemplified generativity.

The results of this study strongly suggest that participants' positive professional development experiences - which occurred in a learning environment characterized by relational qualities - not only fostered their flourishing, but encouraged their development and application of relational qualities to their own teaching. It follows that as one applies relational qualities to one's teaching, he or she fosters further development of these qualities. If these qualities foster flourishing, identifying them as competencies worth developing appears to have tremendous potential. The more professional development experiences that higher education give part-time faculty that supports the effectiveness of a relational learning context, the greater the possibility that these teachers will develop relational competence.

Question 7: Imagine that the year is 2015. As a nation-wide community, higher education has developed and implemented what you perceive as significantly positive changes in how it provides professional development to part-time faculty. Describe what you see the higher education community doing.

This section reviews what participants identified when asked what they envisioned higher education doing if it was providing significantly positive things for part-time faculty professional development. These responses basically echo those

elements of the part-timer's plight. Conceptualized from participants' responses, dimensions of what participants envisioned include that higher education would: *value part-time faculty; provide opportunities for relationships and community;* and *provide resources.*

Value Part-Time Faculty

Each participant has responded to the plight in their unique way based again on their personality and life circumstances. Understandably, their answers to this question came with a range of emotions which appeared to be frustration, resignation, acceptance, hopelessness, and anger. Regardless, the identified areas participants noted as to what higher education would be doing in 2015 include: *transform attitudes and perceptions regarding part-time faculty; grant pay equity; provide relationship avenues.* These are discussed below.

The participants' use of words when describing higher education's need to *transform attitudes and perceptions* toward part-time faculty make a powerful statement about how dismissed and disrespected part-timers feel. What they suggest characterizes a relational/ethic of care attitude. They used the words *respect; kindness; support; acknowledgment; connection; its trust; use of common sense; guidance, attention,* and *attending to.* Mayra spoke of validation in a general way, saying higher education needs to show "some sense of that 'we value…understanding your value to the institution because if you weren't there the institution wouldn't be able to do what they want to do'." Eleanor said:

> *I think that we would start to see our part time people as professionals who are major contributors to the health and vitality of the organization and that they need the same kind of respect and support that people do who are in full time position… but they're treated like second-class citizens…there really should be equity and fairness and*

humanity, you know, I think there's inhuman treatment of part timers. We take advantage of their goodwill...So I think part of it needs to be a... different mind set that simply says that part timers are not less than full timers, it's... a different structure in which this person has contributed to the organization. But that their contribution is immensely valuable...

She also emphasized that part of what also needs to happen is eliminating the language used to distinguish part-time faculty status:

I think we have to get rid of the language...I appreciate [that there's] something to be said about the language of core... a full- time faculty member and a part-time faculty member can both be core or full contributors. So I think it's an acknowledgement that part of the reason that part timers are at universities, institutions, and colleges is because they can't afford to have anybody on full-time...So...some of it might be getting rid of this part time/full time language that creates this classist society...

Mayra describes higher education's task as a comprehensive reassessment of the part-time status: "...a different way at looking at who that person is, what that person needs, and what that person brings to the institution..."

Michael gave specific examples:

...the key really is just centered off of ...respect and acknowledgement and have a... caring, a kindness...basic human qualities that Rogers talks about and...genuine human decency...It's the small things like acknowledging the work that's done. Being a practical person I would say start with things that don't cost anything...having people send out a note so there's a personal side of things...

A second dimension within the category of valuing part-time faculty identified in participants' responses was *instituting a non-bifurcated system.* Aziza spoke to this a number of times:

... there is something structurally and basically wrong with the model...I hired adjuncts to come in and teach [when I was full time] and I hated the system then too. And when I started working there was core faculty and associate faculty. Everyplace has different terminology... I guess to me ultimately it's what serves the students well. These tiered systems mainly serve financial needs of the colleges...I know I don't serve the student as well as I did when I was [full-time] faculty...And it certainly doesn't serve me as well either...

Claude simply said there was no other way but to keep hustling.

> *... [it] depends on enrollments...but I don't see a change. They've always taken advantage of adjuncts and that's the direction they're going, not the other way. So as an individual, you have to hustle, you've got to figure out how to make yourself valuable...to whatever institution or whatever environment. As a group, that's a good question because it's a buyers' market. There's just tons of us out there... if you don't want to do it they've got ten other people who will...*

Anticipated was participants' unanimous initial response to this question: *grant pay equity*. Michael said "...equal raises. The entire [full-time] faculty are getting raises every year. Wouldn't that make sense to have that apply to the adjunct salaries as well? Carving out some kind of consistency for adjuncts..." Eleanor said "equity around pay. I mean, people are scratching out a living..." Aziza said "...The pay would have to be good enough...because the time I put in is a lot, like it's not that much that I get back, in terms of finances..." She also said she felt benefits needed to be part of this revised equation. Julie said "the salary piece, trying to keep that competitive...", and both she and Eleanor said they felt benefits should be included. Claude did not voice pay as an issue but rather the ever-present concern about job security: "The only thing I think part time faculty would find meaningful is: Do we have some guarantee for the job? That's what I mean about pragmatism. You can't bullshit an adjunct. The bottom line is: 'You want me to be developed? Give me some job security...'"

Provide Opportunities for Relationships and Community

Part and parcel to transforming attitude, participants pointed to the importance of administrators establishing more active relationships with their part-time faculty. This relationship could take various forms. Eleanor spoke emphatically about this:

... [they need to say] 'We expect to have a relationship with you for an extended period of time and because of that we're going to invest in you and your development. We're going to help you excel because you're going to help us excel as opposed to thinking of you as a band aid or a stop gap...

Julie and Eleanor also commented that they thought that it would be important to be able to receive feedback through an established relationship. Julie noted "I don't have anyone watch me in the classroom... [I think we need] observation, and then feedback, for adjuncts, I mean for everybody." Eleanor elaborated:

...the fundamental question that every person needs to know the answer to is 'how am I doing?' Because what goes with 'how am I doing?" is 'are goals clear?', and ' are the expectations for what an excellent teacher looks like clear?'; ' do I understand what my authority is?'; ' do I understand where if I step over these places what consequences might happen?'; ' do I understand what kind of support I can expect from you?'; ' do I understand if I can improve ability?'; ' do I understand from your perspective - on a scale from 1 to 5 with one bad and ten great - if I want to be a five and you only see me as a three or four, what I need to do to pull that together?'...

Eleanor speaks to a number of things: institutional support, clarification of goals, and having a relationship with one's institution. This relationship is not important to all I part-time faculty, however. Michael said:

...It might be very different if it's between someone who comes in and teaches one class a semester like we have a couple business guys who come in and teach a very specific part of business theory, and they're in, they're out and we never see them again, versus some of those...who have a very strong commitment to the school...

Each of the nine participants identified the need for community, and stated they felt higher education should be *encouraging the formation of learning communities* among part-timers. They gave a number of ideas about the forms these communities could take. Using technology was an example Mayra gave:

...there's a lot of different ways you could do it technologically...if an institution cared, to put their resources there, we could... have videoconferencing where we talk about what's going on with our students...we could all be sitting in the same room...[I also think of] retreats...and I think about...not where you're being taught something necessarily, but something where you're participating in an experience

that deepens your understanding of the nature of your work, and the relationship between self and work...

Recalling her many years of regular dialogue with peers, Aziza emphasized coming together to discuss curriculum as "... an opportunity to be a member of the community, in a non-exploitative manner. That [is] a vision of how part-time faculty would be... It would be a focus on the students' learning...then I think it would naturally follow that the faculty play a different role, in the institutions..."

Shelley placed primary importance on the relationship adjuncts could develop with one another, emphasizing this could be done outside of the confines of the institution's input/encouragement or guidelines:

...my dream would be to have a cohort of adjuncts who could keep each other energized...we could have a [regional] cohort where [a number of schools'] adjuncts get together and do a seminar for themselves. Talk about ideas, praxis, pedagogy, dangerous dialogue...that's where the energy is. Keep it out of the mainstream...it's the quote I use from Grace Paley: 'All the energy is in the tributaries'. So if we could figure out how to inspire ourselves, we could take really great stuff into the academy through the side doors. But I think the hard part is to keep ourselves inspired because we're at the bottom of the totem pole, treated--we're not treated, we just show up... Since we're being relied on to be the academy, how do we come together to inspire ourselves, encourage ourselves to really do creative stuff I think it's really important for people to be together. I don't think a total on-line Blackboard [Forum] is going to help...

Other ways participants identified how faculty could learn was in some kind of paired relationship, or mentoring. Julie supervisor - her primary relationship within the institution, is both a model and a mentor to Julie:

...I model after the head of our department...She's been teaching here for 23 years. She's fantastic...she's not strict, but accepting things of them and holding them to a standard, so that's something I've been working on and becoming better at...[and]... whenever I'm frustrated with something, I'll go and I'll discuss my frustrations from the class [with her]...

Julie added "I'm that adjunct in that little corner…so working together may be mentoring, having a full time faculty mentor a part-time faculty." She elaborated on the concept of mentoring, particularly for the mentor:

> *I think a lot of times people are thinking 'well, what do I get out of it?' And I think…if you can't see that….I think a lot of times people [don't] see that they could get something out of that kind of relationship…I don't…like the word mentoring…I think there's something about it that makes you think that the full-time faculty has lots more to offer the part-time faculty and I'm not sure that's necessarily true all the time…*

Julie points to conflicting perspectives regarding what part-time faculty who have been or are part- or full-time practitioners could teach full-time faculty. Whether or not some *could* learn from their part-time colleagues would first require their acknowledging the possibility. Julie added she thought it would be valuable for adjuncts to mentor one another.

Participants' responses suggest that some know from experience how relationships including mentoring (Cohen, 1995; Menges, 1999; Sorcinelli, 2002), learning communities (Cox, 2001; Shulman, 2000; Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002) and one-to-one periodic meetings fosters meaningful learning. Their responses also suggest that some of them believe higher education owes part-timers this effort.

Provide Resources

Michael identified a number of concrete resources he thinks institutions should provide their part-time faculty:

> *…you could do a lot like giving adjuncts a $20 Borders gift certificate at the end of their term for a minimal amount of money depending on how many faculty you have, you could take some of that money and [give it to part-time faculty] with a card saying 'please go buy a book at Borders related to your field'…I can't imagine how it would feel - that small amount from [my employer]… just the acknowledgement… 'you've been teaching here for [a number of] years, here's some money, can you pick up another book, we can give you a little bit more so you can teach a little bit more when you [return next year, so]… practical, real things that are going to actually*

> *benefit people who are driving an hour to teach or coming in later at night...[like] USB drives, helping them with CDs if they're burning them, make sure the AV equipment is working later at night when you have to teach...*

Others spoke to the fact that in many cases, providing resources naturally encourages community learning. Aziza illustrates this when she said the institution should provide the space for faculty to meet. Julie said "I think having part-time instructors taking courses...is really important... [as is]...bringing in speakers...and lecturers to discuss things that might happen in the classroom..." She added that "because adjuncts have such different schedules, doing like a Blackboard forum, an on-line forum...would be helpful..."

Bill said he thought it would be important to encourage part-time faculty to pursue their own interests.

> *... generally I think I'd probably start off with where the passions are for the individuals in the group. And if they're really divergent and if you had a budget or some way of supporting that I might encourage them to each individually pursue that thing that they're passionate about...even to the point where, stretching a little bit about whether that would be immediately applicable to what they're doing, because they might find that connection themselves and once again, I said, getting better at this might in a tangential way make them better as a teacher... In higher education you got people that are adults. They've explored a lot of different avenues and they often times have a sense of what they're excited about or what they might want. And they might be a little hesitant about it because it doesn't have a nice fit into what they're teaching.*

This is an example of investing in adjunct faculty both financially and in terms of relationship-building.

Summary

Participants' narratives support the premise that part-time faculty professional development needs vary greatly. Consequently, their responses to the question "How do you define professional development?" lead them to share their perceptions and

experiences of professional development. Although definitions of professional development overlap, commonalities among their careers exist when viewed developmentally. Those participants early in their teaching career such as Julie talked about more structured experiences, while those who have taught for many years point to less-structured kinds of experiences. Further, successful self-direction is foundational to whether or not participants sustain and often flourish in their teaching practice over the years. Ross' persistence in seeking out informal mentors and Eleanor's and Claude's description of their experiences being completely on their own illustrate this.

Participants identified experiences that ranged from one week in length to over many years and that incorporated learning with others as positive. Participants noted a sense of freedom in these experiences. It was through the recognition/acknowledgement they received during these experiences that engendered a freedom to pursue, create, and try out new ideas. Because the experience occurred over a period of time, this freedom was reinforced by participants' ongoing recognition/acknowledgement, which then, in turn, reinforced sense of freedom.

Participants' responses to how their positive experiences informed their subsequent teaching suggests that overall, these experiences developed a desire and increased ability to foster meaningful relationships with students. They increased their focus on student flourishing, increased their authenticity and openness to self development, and some made greater efforts toward a mutuality with one's institution.

Interestingly, participants identify some similar aspects in what they see as their gifts, skills, and talents they bring to their teaching. Themes they spoke to included their positioning learning relationships at the center of learning. This includes

learner-learner and teacher learner relationships. They bring more of themselves to their classrooms, which they noted as one of the ways their positive experience informed their subsequent teaching. They identified inviting their students' authenticity as a gift they bring to the classroom as well.

Relational qualities are present in the participants' positive experiences, how those experiences inform their subsequent teaching, and what gifts skills and talents they bring to their classrooms. What participants identify as what higher education would be providing part-time faculty eight years from now were it significantly positive includes an established relationship that is bi-directional and characterized by respect. There appears to be a significant connection between the degree to which participants feel valued and not only what they are paid, but what they are called - how they are referred to - the degree of relationship (contact) they have with their employing institution, and the amount of resources to which they have access. Michael says just a note can make a significant difference in whether or not he feels valued. Not only is this a minute task for administration to complete, it is a statement from the administration that they notice Michael. The two minutes it took to write the note showed they made the conscious decision to connect with Michael. This acknowledgement - the act of relating although brief and on paper - brings the part-time faculty out of the margins, the invisible zone, and into an acknowledged existence within one's employing institution. What participants' narratives strongly suggest that relational learning as a professional development generates further relational practices. Whether or not this leads to relational competence depends on the people or parties involved.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This dissertation investigates a looming issue that higher education has yet to address: how it will prioritize part-time faculty professional development needs and provide opportunities to meet those needs. This becomes more vital in light of the insights and professional development models borne out of higher education's new positioning as a learning organization. Failure to include part-time faculty in this new knowledge and these new learning models will result in a growing disconnect between an increasingly diverse student populations' learning needs and a part-time population adequately equipped to meet these needs. Elman (2003) highlights a further risk that could result, based on the fact that accreditation organizations "require institutions to demonstrate that they meet standards by having quality-control procedures that ensure the selection, development, and retention of a competent faculty (p. 71). It is in higher education's best interest to invite part-time faculty into the conversation about what makes a good education an *exemplary* one, so they can bring the fruits of this inclusion to their classrooms and their collegial community. Ultimately, providing part-time faculty with this crucial support encourages greater success of higher education's mission.

It is essential that professional development address effective ways to inform part-time faculty's understanding of this diverse population. A small number of institutions have made this commitment by implementing initiatives aimed at supporting their part-

timers and cultivating excellence in teaching and learning. Yet these initiatives represent a near-indecipherable percentage among those institutions that employ part-time faculty. I believe higher education must end its marginalization of part-time faculty and commit itself as an organization to share the responsibility with its part-timers for professional development.

Given the need to create part-time faculty models that take into account budget constraints, this study reviewed current theoretical conceptualizations in the fields of relational practices, self-directed learning and learning communities. This review served as the context for the analysis of positive professional development experiences identified by nine part-time faculty. What made these experiences positive for participants was the opportunity to develop professional relationships with peers and/or a senior faculty member. Based on these results, a general professional development model is proposed which can facilitate flourishing of a wide range of part-time instructors through a variety of professional development relational practices.

Positive Professional Development Experiences

The positive professional development experiences reported by participants illustrate an essential need for opportunities to learn in relationship to another and/or in a learning community. This combination of experiences in addition to self-directed learning efforts was described as most significant. Notable in studies by Lyons (2007), Lambert and Cox (2007) and Zutter (2007) is the fact that researchers surveyed part-time faculty's professional development needs prior to designing their initiative. Each initiative provided the part-timer with opportunities to engage in a sustained relational experience. They include venues that invite part-time faculty participants to engage in both dialogue

and critical reflection. These studies bear out that learning communities and mentor-based relationships are professional development initiatives being tested and refined. Ultimately, the fact that participants in this study described significant and positive experiences characterized by one or more sustained relationships, either with one other person or a small group of people strongly supports the need for institutions to create ways their part-time faculty can engage in ongoing relationships.

These findings highlight tremendous benefits for part-time faculty. First, relationships provide some balance to those who feel isolated in their self-directed learning efforts. As illustrated in participants' reports, learning relationships characterized by relational practices such as relational awareness, mutuality and a willingness to not know, enhance the learning experience in specific ways. Incorporating relational qualities as guidelines or parameters at the beginning of the experience encourages learning contexts in which participants feel visible and validated. Thus there is potential value when higher education designs formats that provide part-time faculty with the option to participate in one or more learning relationships.

Further implications come from participants' reports that the freedom they felt as a result of the validation/recognition during their positive experience led to their increased ability to sustain themselves. In this context, sustaining themselves went beyond surviving, getting by, or maintaining, to feeling energized, motivated, and passionate about teaching. What Eleanor described as her "self-sustaining system" aptly illustrates this point. The system she learned in a relationship became the means for fueling her passion and motivation.

A third and no less promising finding from this research is that participants' increased ability to sustain themselves in turn cultivated their ability to foster meaningful relationships with their students. This has potent implications. If relational professional development leads some part-timers to infuse similar qualities in their relationships with students, positive learning experiences for students are the result. Higher education administrators have a tremendously powerful and far-reaching strategy waiting to be realized. They need only recognize this strategy and commit to ways they can establish and encourage this generativity.

Recommendations

Three points must be noted before one can make recommendations toward this daunting task. First, the decades-long existence of perceptions and attitudes toward the part-timer reminds us that any renovation of these attitudes and perceptions will take significant time as well. Changes in higher education's bifurcated faculty system and typical references to part-time faculty will be gradual. Yet the establishment and growing number of full-time contingent faculty positions (albeit still "contingent"), schools starting to pay part-time faculty based on seniority, and successful unionizing on a number of campuses are clear signs this transformation has begun.

Further, realistic assessment of the complexity inherent in this transformation demands that institutions share responsibility for attending to the part-time faculty's professional development needs. Each must not only conceptualize its part-time faculty professional development initiatives, but implement these initiatives as well. Given what this study and others bear out about the importance of relationship in one's professional development, a model with relationship at its context offers transformative potential.

With the realities identified above, I propose a model that incorporates intentional, professional development which is based on relationships between part-time faculty and their employers. Learning communities, mentoring options, and web-sites are encouraged as well. This model describes one way institutions and/or departments can address part-time faculty's professional development needs and in doing so, contribute to the larger organizational transformation. It suggests potential for greater flourishing as described in this research, which in turn may increase excellence in teaching.

While a small number of institutions addressing part-time instructors' professional development needs is good news, participants in this study pointed unanimously to the larger issue: higher education must commit to transforming its entrenched perceptions of and attitudes toward part-time faculty. Professional organizations such as the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education must lead this across-the-board commitment. As frontrunners in research and initiatives formed by newer 'learning organization' premises, these organizations lead the way in defining, maintaining, and revising standards of excellence in teaching and learning. Higher education prides itself on its vision. It will foster a successful transformation only when it makes a community-wide commitment to action.

A Relational Model of Professional Development

Participants' narratives substantiate the sheer lack and critical need for a relationship between part-time faculty and their employing institutions. The institution must first invite a connection with its part-timers that allows part-timers' engagement on different levels. This connection needs to convey appreciation and communicate respect.

The model is based on two interrelated realities. First, because higher education's economic terrain will not improve for the foreseeable future; it follows that academic institutions will only consider professional development models/initiatives that are economically realistic. Second, in a tight economy, it is improbable that many departments will have the budgetary means to hire someone solely responsible for faculty development. Initiatives which administrators may be most willing to consider must be practical and viable, taking into account the time and effort already required in faculty's established roles and responsibilities. As reiterated above, the first step comes in the necessary acknowledgement of the critical need for part-time faculty professional development. Having done this, administrators redefine part-time faculty professional development as an urgent goal and reposition it as a high priority.

The second step in the model is acknowledging that the part-time instructor's position in relationship to the university mirrors the student's position in the classroom, which has historically been based on a power-over relationship model. It is clear that one-to-one and group learning relationships based instead on power-with models appear to provide the greatest potential for successfully fostering part-time faculty flourishing. Four learning formats through which part-timers could be in relationship with their employing institution are discussed: *liaison, mentor, learning communities,* and *web-based connections.* These formats are informed by participants' responses about what characterized their positive professional development experiences and what they saw higher education doing in 2015 if it were providing positive professional development opportunities to its part-time population.

Faculty Liaison

The liaison role would be established at the department or institutional level. Because this model is grounded in practices characterized by power-with relationships, a commitment to training those willing to participate is required. Thus, relational practices must be learned and or reviewed by those interested in serving as liaisons. Similar to Weispfenning's (2000) model, a department faculty member in this role would meet with new and returning part-time faculty members[23] at the beginning of the term. The purpose of the liaison is to establish a face-to-face foundation between the new part-time faculty member and the department in order to inform, clarify, and discuss the larger context of adjunct faculty roles within the department. The following agenda would guide this first meeting:

1. Find out who the part time faculty member is: their experience, their motivations for teaching, their specific interests;
2. Provide departmental and institution-related information (e.g., faculty and student handbooks, policies and campus contact information); Explaining the liaison's role and availability;
3. Provide information about any available funds for professional development opportunities;
4. Explain alternative ways the part-timer can be in a learning relationship with the institution, including participation in a part-time (or other) faculty learning community, pairing up with a mentor, and/or accessing a part-time university-wide or department-based websites that includes a List Serve;

[23] In those institutions that have Teaching and Learning Centers or Centers for Teaching Excellence, it is likely that some version of this process currently takes place.

5. Ask the part-time faculty if there are areas they want to learn more about or discuss related to their teaching ability/instruction/development. One example might be a brief discussion about self-directed learning followed by an invitation to the part-time faculty to identify and assess SDL or related competencies;
6. Ask the part-time faculty to begin to imagine the kind of support he/she could get from a liaison;
7. Extend an open invitation to the part-timer for future meetings based on the part-timer's professional development needs.

Getting acquainted through the above steps and emphasizing the open invitation to meet again on an as-needed basis (in the context of an intentional, shared power relationship model) are primary goals of this first (and only required) meeting.

Worth reiterating here is how crucial it is to keep in mind the tremendous range of part-time faculty needs (based on learning style, personality, and number of years teaching, among other factors). Thus, the liaison would frame subsequent meetings as invitational and on an as-needed/desired basis. Those who can and want to participate in this professional development learning relationship would have that option. A department might want to consider requiring an end-of-the-term meeting as well.

Given that some part-time faculty might not need much contact - particularly the free lancer or the expert/specialist who may have taught for many years - this first meeting might serve as the main contact the liaison has with some part-timers. With relational awareness, mutuality and the willingness to not know as foundational qualities in the relationship between instructor and liaison, the aim is to facilitate part-timers' learning in ways congruent with their needs. Critical reflection would be encouraged.

Authenticity would potentially grow as a result. This would be particularly important for those individuals concerned about identifying needs and/or wanting support. The relational framework would encourage both participants in the learning relationship to view it as mutually valuable, leading both to renewed intentionality.

Learning Communities, Mentoring Options, and the Web

This study substantiates the vital role learning communities can play in part-time faculty's growth and flourishing. Liaisons might provide part-timers with cohort- or topic-based learning communities that are both face-to-face and web-based. Further, liaisons would query instructors during the first meeting about their interest in participating in a learning community and what they hope to learn. Then the liaison could provide a new or returning instructor with names of those wanting a similar cohort type. The liaison would also search out adequate space, provide relevant readings when requested, and serve as a resource to learning communities. A range of topic and cohort communities would account for varying needs. Shelley, for example, said she wanted support from institutions in creating a learning community for herself and others hungry for contact and for sharing ideas about teaching and learning. This learning format option would require the liaison to routinely network with campus departments and might lead to developing connections with other nearby institutions toward the goal of providing appropriate learning community options to part-time faculty.

This model would establish a number of mentoring options. Part-time faculty could choose to pair with another instructor with a similar experience level, with a more seasoned part-timer, or with a tenure-track faculty member. Department faculty would identify themselves at the start of each semester, and their service in this capacity would

be recognized as part of their professional activities for the year. During the first meeting the liaison would ask part-time faculty with more experience about their willingness to mentor a part-timer; the part timer would be offered (at the least) public recognition within the department for this valuable service.

For many, access to a departmental or institutional website would serve as a complement to one or more of the options. For other part-time instructors, website access would become the primary connection to the institution for other part-time instructors, be this by choice or necessity. Although a number of universities including Lesley University maintain websites specifically for their part-time faculty, these sites are typically university or school-wide. While a university website with a link for part-timers may be adequate for many, a department-based link might create a greater sense of connection between part-timers and their departments.

Understood in the presentation of this proposal is the fact that meeting individually with instructors is not new; rather, meeting with them in the context of an intentional, relational framework is new. Inherent in establishing such a relationship is consciousness about mutuality, the willingness to not know, and the belief that each participant in the learning relationship is a valuable contributor. Through open, ongoing invitations to explore, discuss, and critically reflect, this learning relationship encourages greater authenticity among part-timers. Greater authenticity encourages part-time instructors to be increasingly "up front" about their professional development concerns and needs. If full time faculty are not familiar with this orientation, they should be coached or trained themselves.

Similarly, the other proposed formats by themselves are not new. As evidenced in the literature, successful mentoring programs, learning communities, and websites designed for part-time faculty on college campuses abound. Yet when offered together as a set of options, these formats provide greater potential for meeting a significantly wide range of professional development needs within the part-time faculty population.

This model acknowledges part-time faculty as vital and central to higher education's mission as well as proposes formats that provide part-time faculty professional development. It upholds a moral imperative for higher education. As a community valuing best practices in teaching and learning, higher education has a responsibility to support part-time faculty's efforts toward developing exemplary teaching, pedagogy, and practice. The argument that part-time faculty are responsible for their own professional development is nothing less than a harsh refusal to acknowledge the significant role part-timers play in higher education's success and viability. Full-time faculty sometimes blame the hiring of part-timers for the erosion of the tenure system. They join administrators in marginalizing part-timers, yet desperately seek part-timers to help in supplying students with the education they have paid to receive. Sharing the responsibility with part-time faculty for this population's professional development requirements is an ethical commitment and one that must be made if higher education is to maintain its mission.

Limitations

Limitations to this study must be noted. First, this is a small participant sample. A much larger sample could provide greater diversity of response in what part-timers describe as a positive professional development experience. One could conduct such a

study based on the same questions used in this study. Second, these participants do not comprise a random sample, but rather a sample obtained through the snowball method. My goal was to obtain a random sample and it initially promised to be random; I had no prior relationship with the majority of potential participants administrators referred to me. But the majority of those who actually agreed to participate were acquaintances, friends' acquaintances, and friends of acquaintances. Requesting department deans' assistance through a mass mailing at a significant number of sites coupled with my willingness to more readily interview participants by phone might lead to a much-closer-to-random sample.

In addition, precluding any generalizability of this analysis to the at-large part-time population is the fact that eight of the nine participants were Euro-American. Although a range in age, gender, and field of study was adequately represented, participant race, ethnicity, class, and years of teaching experience were not (I did not inquire about participant's spirituality or religious identity, not did I ask them to identify a sexual orientation). Similarly to what might yield a more random sample, a much large participant search might yield a significantly more representative participant sample.

Finally, this study recognizes but does not examine the ongoing challenges higher education administrators currently face. For example, administrators increasingly freeze vacated tenure-track positions as a temporary solution to economic constraints, only to lose the option to reinstate it. An increasingly diverse student population requires a greater range of support services. Time constraints may be a key factor as well. As positions are frozen, remaining faculty must share those responsibilities left by a team member not replaced.

The fact that as researcher I taught under part-time status for seventeen years requires ethical consideration. Cottle (2002) warns, "In forming our reactions and making our interpretations ...we constantly run the risk of pushing our stories against the stories of others and in a sense demanding that others rethink their stories in light of our stories..." (p. 535). I deepened my understanding of those facets which create each part-time faculty's circumstances significantly during doctoral study. However, I *grew into* my role as researcher during this study. Following each interview I reviewed my interactions with participants, concerned that my years as part-time instructor might make me vulnerable to developing blind spots during the research process. To safeguard against this occurring, I reviewed my analysis of participants' narratives with advisors and colleagues throughout the research process.

Implications for Future Research

Each of the limitations identified above invites future research possibilities. Although it is challenging to obtain random and representative samples, participants from these participant pools will most fully inform best practices for part-time faculty professional development. People of color are one population among many historically and still to some degree oppressed and marginalized. Their voices adequately represented within the larger part-time population would contribute to the sorely-needed visibility of part-timers' experiences. Another researcher might look at part-time faculty from institutional perspectives with the goal of assessing institution administrators' current attitudes, perceptions, and typical references identifying part-time faculty. Surveying institutions and interviewing administrators for their perceptions about why

part-time faculty professional development is not being implemented would inform this important body of research as well.

Although not surprising based on the literature, most stunning to this researcher during this project has been participants' reports about how they are treated and what higher education needs to provide part-time faculty: acknowledgement, respect, and inclusivity. Universities carefully and routinely attend to their mission, their budget, and their success at achieving excellence in carrying out that mission, all the while overlooking the instructor population that unquestionably supports and maintains that success. Regardless of economic circumstances dictated by political, economic and cultural realities, part-time faculty should no longer bear the brunt of a responsibility that ethically is a shared one with higher education. If higher education is to truly serve students, it must create a more inclusive vision that cares for its people - all of them - regardless of teaching status.

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Professional Development for the Part-Time Instructor:

Helping People Flourish

Principal Investigator: Sharlene Cochrane
Director, Professor: Independent Study Degree Program, Interdisciplinary Inquiry Division, GSASS
Professor: Interdisciplinary Studies Program, Interdisciplinary Inquiry, Arts and Social Sciences

Student Researcher: Janet Thompson
Doctoral Student, Lesley University, Cambridge, MA

I am requesting your consent to be a participant in a study I am conducting for my doctoral research. This study is designed to explore specific facets of the part-time faculty's positive professional development experiences. A review of the literature indicates that professional development for higher education faculty has played a critical role in any faculty member's career trajectory, and that it must be reassessed and redesigned routinely in order to best assist faculty as they work to stay current with changes resulting from socio-cultural shifts, student population, and increasing use of technology in education delivery. The part-time faculty's own narrative about positive professional development experiences is essentially invisible. The additional goal of this study is to document these experiences.

The expected length of time I ask for your participation is one seventy-five-minute meeting. This meeting will be audio-taped for analysis purposes. The approximate number of participants I am recruiting is 8-10; 2-3 from 4 higher education settings. Your participation will involve being interviewed by me.

You will be expected to communicate with only myself for this research. The research will be done at a location that provides us privacy for the duration of the interview.

The potential risks involved as a result of your participation include feelings of vulnerability, frustration, anger, and appreciation as you discuss this content area. I anticipate any feelings you have as a result of reflecting on these experiences will be directly related to the quantity and/or quality of those experiences through your direct experience of them.

Your participation in this research may not provide any benefit to you directly. Possible benefits include a renewed understanding of how your professional development experiences have informed your development as a teacher in both pedagogy and instructional practices. By participating in this research you will be adding to the general body of knowledge on this subject.

Your participation is voluntary. Should you decide at any point during the interview that you no longer want to participate, you may stop the interview. You may skip questions.

You have the right to remain anonymous. If you elect to remain anonymous, I will keep your records private and confidential to the extent allowed by law. I will use numerical identifiers rather than your name on study records. Your name and other facts that might identify you will not appear when I present this study or publish its results.

If for some reason you do not wish to remain anonymous, you may specifically authorize the use of material that would identify you as a subject in the experiment.

I will give you a copy of this consent to keep. Both the investigator and the subject should keep a copy of the signed form.

Investigator's Signature:
Date: _____
Signature: _____
Print Name: _____

Subject's Signature:
I am eighteen years of age or older. The nature and purpose of this research have been satisfactorily explained to me and I agree to become a participant in this study as described above. I understand that I am free to discontinue participation at any time if I so choose and that the investigator will gladly answer any questions that arise during the course of the research.
Date: _____
Signature: _____
Print Name: _____

Professional Development for Part-Time Faculty Study

Demographic and Background Questions

These questions will be used for demographic support data only. Your name and the name of any institutions you teach for will not be identified in any way.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Age:

Gender:

Number of years teaching in higher education:

Current teaching position(s) in higher education:

Previous teaching positions:

Thank you very much for your participation in my research.

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